

# THE

# House of Assembly Debates

## (OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1994 - 99

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### HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

*Tuesday, 10th June, 1997*

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 11.18 a.m. on Tuesday, 10th June, 1997.

#### PRESENT

His Honour I. A. ROETT, B.A., Dip. Ed., (Speaker)  
His Honour R. D. MARSHALL, (Deputy Speaker)  
Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, B.A., M.A., (Econ.),

J.P.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR, M.Sc.(Econ.) (Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs and Minister for the Civil Service)

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, LL.B, (Hons.) (Leader of the Opposition)

Sir HAROLD St. JOHN, Q.C., LL.B.

Mr. L. R. TULL, Q.C., M.A.

Hon. the Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Q.C., M.A., M.Sc.(Econ.)

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER, (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Tourism and International Transport) (Leader of the House)

Mr. J. O. TUDOR, J.P.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE, (Minister of Public Works, Transport and Housing)

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, J.P., B.A. (Hons.), Dip. Ed., LL.B.(Hons.), L.E.C. (Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development)

Mr. D. CARTER

Mr. G. A. CLARKE, B.Sc., Dip. Ed., (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Housing)

Mr. J. M. EDGHILL

Mr. F. J. STUART, B.A., LL.M.

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER, J.P., B.A., Dip. Ed., B.Sc. (Chairman of Committees)

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY

Hon. R. St. C. TOPPIN, LL.B., (Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tourism and International Transport)

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON, LL.B. (Minister of Health and the Environment)

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, LL.B. (Minister of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture)

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL, B.Sc. Econ. (Hons.), M.A. (Public Finance).

*Prayers were led by Rev. Canon Ivan Harewood.*

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is now in session.

#### MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the meeting of Tuesday, May 27, 1997.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes of Tuesday, May 27, 1997 which Minutes have been circulated, be taken as read.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: I beg to second that, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no corrections or observations, then let those Minutes stand confirmed.

#### PAPERS

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following.

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The National Insurance and Social Security (CARICOM Agreement on Social Security) Order 1997.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am commanded to lay the following:

Annual Report of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the year 1995.

#### GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a resolution in support of the Foreign Policy of the Government. This resolution is not on the Order Paper.

#### SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that Standing Orders Nos. 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 be suspended for the rest of this day's sitting.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: I beg to second that.

*The question that those Standing Orders be suspended for the remainder of the sitting was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.*

#### GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Mr. SPEAKER: Government Business is now the order of the day.

#### ORDER NO. 3 - THE CIVIL AVIATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1997

Hon. R. St. C. TOPPIN: Mr. Speaker, the matter before Parliament this morning is a relatively simple matter. Today we are looking at the Civil Aviation Amendment Bill basically to make adequate provision for the registration of mortgages of aircrafts which are registered in Barbados and the establishment of a system of priority in respect of those interests.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that I should, perhaps, give a little background to the Bill before going into the details. At present, Barbados already has a facility in place for the registration of mortgages, in fact, we currently have some 17 aircrafts on our registry, three corporate aircrafts, two of which are foreign owned and another fourteen.

It is also fair to say that we have already, a fairly open registry, in the sense that our registry permits registration not only to the Government and citizens of Barbados but also to all members of all Commonwealth countries and indeed to all those who are party to the Chicago Convention. So, in that sense, our registry is

already open. What is really lacking and what this new proposed legislation focuses on is a provision to allow for the proper registration and the protection of security interest in aircraft.

If you look at Rule 9 of our Civil Aviation and Navigation Regulations 1984, you will see that it makes reference to a register of aircraft mortgages but that provision in our Rules really attaches to nothing in the Act itself and the process now is a bit untidy and this legislation before Parliament today really is to tidy it up and also to make provision for the recognition of priorities in relation to mortgages and securities interest.

This is because the financiers and owners of aircrafts have been requiring that mortgage priorities that are attached to the various parties in relation to aircrafts should be recorded in the same location as the registration of the aircraft itself so the interest should really follow the aircraft and the ranking should be protected on the same registry.

In the past, 1992 in particular, Barbados has clearly lost out on some business because of not having this provision in place. I see the Honourable Member for St. John shaking his head because he would recall that when he was Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, he received a letter from Alfred Clarke & Company in respect of a certain company, A.I. Leasing Tools which is part of the Airbus Group. What Airbus was proposing to do was to de-register that aircraft in the United States and register it on the Barbados registry. But prior to doing that, the consent of the financier involved had to be obtained. They were not going to give their consent to that proposal unless they could be assured that the mortgage could be recognised in Barbados and that it would have ranked as a priority lien in relation to the aircraft once it was put on the aircraft registry in Barbados.

The then Honourable Member, I am not implying that he is not now Honourable, at the time he was unable to give that assurance because of the state of our legislation. Despite Rule 9 in the regulations, he could not give the assurance that that mortgage would have in fact been ranked as a priority lien and the business went abegging.

There was a procedure, of course, that you could have gone, an untidier, long-winding and uncertain way to register under the Bills of Sale Act but it was felt that the Stamp Duty in relation to that Act can at times be prohibitive and it clearly is a bit of deterrence and as I said, on that occasion the business was lost because of the state of our legislation. This legislation would secure that problem.

Now Barbados has decided to approach this issue by way of amending our domestic legislation. We will,

of course, in good time, sooner rather than later, have to look at the question of acceding to the 1948 Mortgage Convention, full title of which really is the Geneva Convention & International Recognition of Rights and Aircrafts and popularly called the Mortgage Convention. We will have to look at acceding to that Convention. It has in place some very elaborate rights in relation to recognition of rights and so on in aircrafts and it is clearly an elaborate network of rights in that Convention.

We are not alone in not acceding to that Convention. There are others who have not acceded, places such as the United Kingdom, which is known in many quarters for its supremacy in the air, they have not acceded to that Convention and by extension neither have the Cayman Islands, Bahamas and so on. We are in the process of ascertaining why it is that countries that are far more eminent than us in some respects are not acceding to the Convention but once that is fully investigated, I may well be taking that issue to Cabinet with a view to having Cabinet agree to Barbados acceding to the particular Convention.

In the meantime, as I have said, we have opted to use the route of amending our domestic legislation to deal with the defect in the law. Let me just say that in amending the legislation, the Ministry of International Transport held consultations with local legal practitioners and the Ministry of International Business and a committee was also set up which comprised representatives from the Attorney General Chambers, local legal practitioners, the Ministry of International Transport and the Ministry of International Trade. Very wide discussions and consultations took place before a decision was made on how to proceed in this matter in terms of amending our domestic legislation.

I will just take you now, if I may to some of the provisions of the legislation itself to highlight some of the important aspects. A new Part 5a is being proposed to be inserted in our Civil Aviation Act. That Part 5a consists of new sections 18a through 18j.

The important one, of course, is the new section 18a, sub-section 1 which says "that the Minister may by order make provision for the mortgaging of aircraft registered in Barbados or capable of being so registered". At the appropriate time, I will in fact move that that be amended to read "that the Minister may by order make provision for the registration of mortgages of aircraft registered in Barbados or capable of being so registered" and of course, that the heading to this new part 5a "Mortgages of Aircraft" be amended as well to read "Registration of Mortgages of Aircraft" since that is basically what we are dealing with.

We are tidying up the position in Barbados in relation to the registration of mortgages of aircraft and the issue of

the ranking of the various security interest attaching to these aircrafts in terms of the mortgages.  
11.30a.m.

Now, subsection (2) basically sets out what the order is supposed to contain and to deal with. In terms of the Order which I will refer to shortly I will be happy to give you a copy so you can follow what I am saying. Order 18A (2) sets out what the order should contain and deal with and this reads as follows:

Without prejudice to the generality of subsection (1), an order under this section may,

- (a) make provision for enabling the mortgage of an aircraft to extend to any store of spare parts for that aircraft and for applying for that purpose, to any such spare parts, provisions mentioned in paragraphs (b) to (e);
- (b) include provisions that correspond (subject to such modifications that appear to the Minister to be necessary or expedient) to any provisions of the Shipping Act, 1994 relating to the mortgaging of ships;

Perhaps the most important subparagraph in this new section 18A is really subparagraph (c) which says that the Order made under this section may make provision respecting the rights and liabilities of mortgagors and mortgagees of such aircraft as are mentioned in subsection (1), and respecting the priority, *inter se*, of such rights and the relationship of such rights to other rights in or over such aircraft including possessory liens for work done to such aircraft;

So this gets to the core of what we are aiming to ensure that once rights and liens are registered there in fact is a provision dealing with the question of the priority of those rights which scares away financiers when they hear that we are not sure that their rights in aircraft will be respected in Barbados and properly recorded and ranked according to the date of registration.

Sub-paragraph (e) states: provide for the rights of mortgagees of such aircraft to be exercisable, in such circumstances as the order specifies in relation to payments for the use of aircraft; and

(g) states: that the order may prescribe the fees to be paid in respect of any matter to which the section relates.

Those are really the more important sections of the Bill and I will not detain the House by going into any other sections at this time.

Now with respect to the order and as indicated I can make a copy available to the Honourable Member. This order is to come about pursuant to the amendment to the legislation I just referred to and pursuant to this new proposed new section ISA the owner will provide for the creation of a register of aircraft mortgages. Rule 4.1 deals with that. It states that any mortgage of an aircraft registered in the Barbados Aircraft Registry may be entered in the register of aircraft mortgages in this order referred to as the Register. So that is basically setting up the Register.

The Order also deals with procedures for the making of applications for registration of mortgages and associated documentation. That is found in Rule 4 sub-rule 2 and sub-rule 3. Sub rule 2 reads: Application to enter a mortgage in the register

- (a) must be made to the Minister by or on behalf of the mortgagee in Form A in the First Schedule, and
- (b) must be accompanied by
  - (i) a copy of the mortgage which must be certified as a true copy, and
  - (ii) the appropriate fee.

Sub-rule 6, page 3, speaks of a notice of intention to make an application to enter a contemplative mortgage of an aircraft in the register hereafter referred to as a priority notice may also be entered in the register. It sets out the procedure for making an application of that kind.

Now with respect to any change in the status of an aircraft this again it must be communicated to the Minister by the mortgagee and the owner also makes provision dealing with the discharge of a mortgage but most importantly in Rule 7 the issue again of the priority of mortgages is fully explained at page 6 rule 7.1 through 5 and I propose to read this.

Sub-rule 1. Subject to this paragraph a mortgage of an aircraft entered in a register has priority over any other mortgage of or other charge on that aircraft other than another mortgage entered in the register.

Sub-rule 2. Where a priority notice has been entered in the register and the mortgage referred to in that order is made and entered in the register not later than 14 days after its notice has been entered the mortgage which is the subject of that notice shall be deemed to have been registered at the time that the notice was given and shall have priority accordingly.

The most important rule or sub-rule in this entire order perhaps is to be found in sub-rule 3 of rule 7. It says that where 2 or more mortgages of an aircraft are entered in the register those mortgages have as between themselves priority according to the time at which they were respectively entered in the register and not according to the dates of the mortgages. It is this provision that the financiers and owners of aircraft overseas would be especially interested in terms of informing them of a decision as to whether or not to agree to the registration of a mortgage of an aircraft in Barbados. That is perhaps the most important issue being sorted out in this order.

The order goes on to make other provisions dealing with the death and bankruptcy of aircraft, the power of sale, all of this is allowed to a mortgagee for breaches and so on and I do not think I need to go through them at this time.

So these are the new features, Mr. Speaker, to be added to our legislation to make our registry, as I said, even more than it is now.

To date a number of countries have not really been involved in this particular activity. At the moment I can think of 3 other countries, there is Bermuda, Cayman Islands and more recently Mauritius. These three countries readily come to mind who are involved in this type of activity but the Cayman Islands and Bermuda have restricted registration to corporate type aircraft. We have no such restrictions on ours. We have restricted registration to the corporate type aircraft and for sure Bermuda registration is restricted to persons residing in Bermuda or to companies and bodies incorporated in Bermuda and having a registered office situated in Bermuda and we are a lot more open, as it were, than they are. The other countries have tended to be fairly passive in terms of marketing this type product. They feel, like we feel, that the concept of the open registry can be promoted as part of our focus in relation to our off shore sector and Barbados has a number of features that will serve as an attraction for those people to come to Barbados to register aircraft in my view. We have first of all a stable political climate. We have a sound well established legal system, and when problems arise in relation to this issue dealing with priorities and so on, they can be sorted out in a competent and respected court of law and they would also provide a neutral registration mark. 11.40a.m.

Any registration mark that is put in an aircraft indicating Barbados is not the type of mark that will generate hostility any part of the world that aircraft flies as has happened sometimes in the past, more in war times, admittedly, but even since then, hostility that might be generated toward US registered aircrafts. For example, they would not be able to fly comfortably over a place

like Libya, or perhaps Cuba, but certainly an aircraft registered in Barbados and carrying the Barbados registration mark can fly any part of the world, so that neutrality in itself should serve as an attraction to persons interested in registering in Barbados.

I believe that this new feature, the more expanded registry should be part of our information kit in relation to our product in the offshore sector. I believe that it is an issue that should be highlighted. Perhaps not the same way as you would go about marketing or highlighting the Ship's registry or another product in their offshore package because certain conventions and unwritten rules govern the way in which you approach the question of marketing and aircraft registry. Sometimes people refrain from doing it altogether. So there must be some degree of decorum in the way in which you would approach attracting the business. But it has to be promoted in some form or fashion.

I believe that while I do not expect that initially, at least, there is going to be any significant increase in revenue generated by the addition of this feature, just let me read the fees involved before I conclude.

The fees are small. In fact, which is perhaps another attraction because the fees would in fact be rated quite low compared to other jurisdictions. The registration of a mortgage for an aircraft for example is 100 dollars. The registration for a priority notice relating to a mortgage is 100 dollars. A registration of change in particulars of mortgages, 50 dollars. The registration of discharge of a registered mortgage, 50 dollars. Registration of a transfer of mortgage, 100 dollars. This is found in schedule two on page 2. Sir, to inspect entries in register, 10 dollars. Provision of a copy of an entry in a register in respect of each page or part thereof, or an uncertified copy, 3 dollars for a certified copy 10 dollars. So the fees are reasonable.

I do not expect therefore that there is going to be an opportunity to earn much direct revenue, certainly initially, by generation of this type of activity in Barbados. But I believe that the expanded registry that we are now creating in Barbados, would provide expanded linkages into the international business community and that itself would result in additional international business for Barbados.

I am not going to detain the House any longer. I do not believe that the matter should be a contentious one. It really is to cure a problem that faces the Honourable Member himself when he was serving as Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs. The Honourable Member for St. John and we are now attempting to deal with that issue.

With those remarks, Mr. Speaker, I would like to now beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

Sir HAROLD St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, in respect of this Bill Sir, I just want to emphasize that this is a matter which should have been tidied up many years ago. It is really a relatively simple matter, in that it tries to set up a regime for aircraft mortgages in the same way that when one mortgages a ship that there is a separate registry. And international financiers and lessees in particular, today are very familiar with the idea that there is in the country of registration of the aircraft a special set of rules and regulations related to the creation of mortgages and also for the priority in respect of them.

When the regulations were made in 1984 it was envisaged that there would not be a registry in Barbados but unfortunately, the Civil Aviation Act itself did not make provision for this. There is only one point that I would like to emphasize and it is that it should be made clear in the Act that the Bills of Sale Act will no longer apply to aircrafts. I notice that the Bill itself says that the Companies Act and any provisions in the Companies Act relating to the registration of a mortgage where the mortgagor, that is the owner of the aircraft is a company, will no longer apply, I think similar provisions should be inserted to say and not that the Bill of Sales Act should not apply. The simple reason is that today in Barbados, if one wants to mortgage an aircraft since it is movable, it has to be mortgaged in the same way as a motor car or any other movable piece of property. That is under the Bills of Sale Act.

Now, that does not apply to ships. I agree with the concept that in Barbados it could be possible for us to attract some aircraft owners to register their aircraft and to use our facilities.

I know for a fact that there are a couple of international business companies operating in Barbados who specialise in providing finance and leasing of aircrafts and it would be a convenience for them, if they could at the same time insist that any aircraft that they finance has to be registered in Barbados and the aircraft registry has to be updated.

So that I recommend the Bill, Sir, subject to the observation that I made. It is really a matter that seeks to equate the position of an aircraft with that of a ship.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the matter before the House is not one with which we will disagree. In fact the Honourable Member for St. Michael North has quite readily pointed out that it was a matter which I had been assigned to resolve many years ago when the Right Honourable Member for St. Michael South

raised the concern with me about this issue of registration of aircraft mortgages.  
11.50a.m.

I was assured that this legislation and whatever consequential matters needed to be done would have been done so that we could have established in Barbados that registering of aircraft mortgages and give the registrants the kind of comfort they need in terms of the priority of those registered mortgages in Barbados.

The fact that this has taken so long to come before this Chamber demonstrates, in my view, that the important changes that are necessary to place Barbados on the map in a number of ways in the offshore sector are not happening.

This Government stands indicted by the fact that having come out of the block swiftly, the Honourable Member for the City in one of the very early debates in this House set up the groundwork for what would be happening in the international business and financial services sector as a whole, not referring to this in particular but this has some relation to it.

Since then, the then junior minister who was since elevated, can speak of very little being achieved in terms of new legislation, new products being made available to those who wish to use Barbados as a domicile. Then a matter like this which in essence had taken the Barbados Labour Party 3 years to bring to the Statute Books -1 was assigned it in 1992. I only had 2 and as I said the then Minister of International Transport assured me that it would require a very simple amendment.

In a sense, because of these bureaucratic delays and also in relation to the priorities which Ministers fail to place on matters such as this, it can be said and is being said in the world by persons who are actively involved in this - I am not talking about public relations specialists. I am talking about people who want to do business in Barbados - that Barbados is not ready, that we are not sufficiently equipped and flexible in relation to amendments that are necessary to legislation to attract new kinds of business.

As I have said, the momentum, particularly in the financial services sector, has slowed to almost a standstill. The mutual fund legislation that was promised within a year by the Honourable Member for the City has not even seen the light of day in this Parliament. The amendments to the IBC Act which were critical we have not yet had them done.

*Aside,*

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: You see, you came out of the block very quickly. At least, in terms of talk you came out of the block and that is all a Government can do in its first few months. You even sought to right what were not really wrongs. I do not complain. Your letter to Mr. Schneider was unnecessary because we do not need him to write about Barbados. He is looking for tax havens and that kind of thing.

Let us talk about this kind of amendment and there are many others like this in which the Government has been dilatory and in which efforts which should be made to place these small matters on the list of priorities have slowed to almost standstill. I was always given the impression that it was a very simple amendment that was needed and particularly because Barbados is a domicile by international business companies and forms a very important part of the attractiveness of this domicile to Canadian companies that the legislation to give effect or comfort to those persons who wish to do business in Barbados should be placed almost at the top of Government's agenda.

I cannot blame the Honourable Member for St. Michael North except that he waited around for a bit too long as well. The matter should have been quickly disposed of and that you can imagine that between 1992 and now as in many other areas Barbados has lost out on business. There are people who have come to these shores who have met with Ministers of Government who have met with public officials at the Central Bank, the IDC and elsewhere and who have pointed out that even based on Government's own pledges to bring new legislation or to amend existing legislation that they are ready to invest.

I am talking about companies which manage, for example, mutual funds, banks coming out of Bermuda and other domiciles. To this day, having spent thousands of dollars visiting, looking at the institutional framework, the regulatory framework in Barbados and deciding that they would be coming forward and setting up in this domicile the legislation to support their activities, they have not become a reality.

I want to say that we should not fool ourselves that when we do not make these changes that other countries which are our competitors sit down with their arms folded. The persons who wanted to invest in Barbados then obviously would have sought out other domiciles and those domiciles are very often more flexible and a lot faster and more efficient in getting the necessary changes which need to be made.

We are far too timid in relation to changes in legislation which would make Barbados a premier financial services and international business domicile. We already have a strong central bank regulatory framework.

We already have a strong banking sector in which we can feel comfortable about the prudential and the regulatory arrangements which are in place. So let us get some of the legislation moving.

I keep asking why it is that we would have taken a Barbadian out of the private sector to show people in the public sector, particularly Ministers, how business is done and how the private sector can come and revolutionise the public sector in Barbados and the Ministry which is not delivering of all those which have been given the opportunity to have private sector people running them - I think there may only be 2 or 3: the Ministry of Industry, the Ministry of International Business... If you could count lawyers as persons coming out of the private sector, I suppose you could say lawyers, but I am talking about people who had a business focus and those Ministries are the Ministries which in my view are showing the least positive results.

So there is cause for alarm that this matter would have taken so long and I hope that the enthusiasm which the Honourable Member for St. Michael North displays in introducing this Resolution and the criticisms which were levelled by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South by implication about the amount of time that it has taken for this to come to the Statute Book would be a salutary warning or create the necessary impression on the Government that if Barbados wants to be ready and if it is true that we are supposed to be facing the global competitive environment with confidence and if we are in fact going to be described as the Singapore of the Caribbean with some authenticity and not just public relations conjuring that the Government will place some of these matters at the top of its priority list. Because it creates opportunities and, in my view, can help to earn foreign exchange for Barbados and also create jobs in doing so and the kind of quality jobs which Barbados should be looking at to provide opportunities for its people.

The matter has been too far long outstanding and the Opposition has no hesitation in supporting it and we only wished that these amendments were brought much faster to this Chamber so that we could speak fulsomely of the Government's efforts to ensure that the international business sector and an area like international transport which impinges on it are truly a priority. 12.00 noon

Regrettably, we are not able to say so. As I say, that stands as an indictment against the Barbados Labour Party for not translating its words into action when it was elected in 1994.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I rise to make a brief intervention on this piece of legislation that is before us. I wish to indicate, as the Honourable Member

for St. John has done, that this is really not a controversial matter. It is a matter in which there is agreement on both sides. If there is any division of view or approach, it is that these matters which are, or perceived to be in the interest of Barbados and its development, tend to take too long and this is not a matter that is a problem for one side of the political spectrum or the other side of the political spectrum.

I am not approaching this in a partisan way. It is something that seems to be endemic in our approach to public and private affairs in Barbados. I think we should seek to bring a greater sense of urgency towards the taking of decisions and also on the efficiency with which those decisions are implemented.

Let me compliment the Minister for bringing this particular measure. He said it has taken him less than two years and he is certainly carrying out his mandate in this particular regard. I listened to his introduction of the measure and it was certainly more complete than some other introductions I have heard for measures in this House coming from that side. I would like to compliment him on the work he has done in this regard.

*Aside.*

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I will give due plaudits in that leading monthly publication. It is awaited with bated breath, Sir. I know that.

Sir, I really want to stress that we need to bring a greater sense of urgency, a greater sense of dynamism towards the formulation of policy and the implementation of policy and programmes, especially where it is developmental.

What we want to say, Sir, is that this is not an issue on which one side or the other side had all the knowledge or all the ideas. I recall discussing this issue in some depth with a former Director of Finance and Planning. I can call his name. He is not in the public service now, Mr. Winston Cox, until he left the public service for other services. He probably wanted a change of activity. I have a very good assessment of these matters and up to that time he was a competent public officer.

I have not done it very often but I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those public officers who through their skills and their particular administrative abilities assisted my Government to bring that greater sense of urgency to the transformation of the economic life of this country at a time when it was being said that we had no particular kind of activity taking place except turning Nelson around, or something like that. That was the normal talk.

Here we have an instance, Sir, of the activity that was going on which, perhaps, was unknown to the neophytes or to those who were not exposed to the functioning of the public sector. They are now learning, albeit slowly, Sir, that a lot of work took place, the ground work and the spade work for economic transformation and laying the foundation. And we laid it out up front.

You yourself, Sir, sitting from your place of non-partisan eminence, are also learning from the contributions that are made on both sides about the development of Barbados in areas which perhaps you yourself were unaware of but it is a learning process for all of us.

I would wish to support this particular measure. We have to be aggressive. We have to be perceptive. We also have to seek out ways and means whereby we can carve our niche in the world economy because that international economy does not owe us a living. We have to create our own opportunities but we must not ride roughshod over the practices that have stood the test of time even though we have to bring a greater dynamism and energy.

I would simply urge the Ministers in their several responsibilities, and particularly the Minister responsible for Civil Aviation, to read the matters, get the background quite clearly and fully, and proceed with implementation as urgently as possible taking this House of Assembly into full account in so doing because sometimes I think we are being bypassed. We are going into those areas where this Chamber is becoming one of the decorous elements in our Constitution and not playing that very effective role to hold the Government accountable and to contribute towards the formulation and development of policy.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, I want to make one or two observations on this matter. One of the best-selling points in offshore promotion for the Barbados Government has been that there is a consensus between the Government, the private sector and the political parties. That is one of the best-selling points. Those of us who go occasionally on these promotion tours will know that fortifies a foreign investor when he wants to make a decision whether he should establish himself or his institution in Barbados.

It is said over and over again that there is no quarrel between the political parties. Indeed, the Honourable Member for St. John who frequents these promotion tours, usually mentions that his very presence there suggests to the prospective foreign investors that there is a consensus among political parties with a policy of attracting offshore investment in this country.

The fact also, Sir, that the private sector is usually very generously represented through the accountants,

lawyers, the insurance people also suggests that we have no quarrel among ourselves. Therefore it is strange that the Honourable Member for St. John should seek to be critical of the Government in any aspect of its offshore strategy. 12.10 p.m.

If one takes a historical position, Sir, it was the Barbados Labour Party in the last B.L.P. administration that put the offshore business sector as one of the key sectors in our planning strategy in economic development in this country. It was met at the time, Sir, by some very vitriolic criticism by the then Democratic Labour Party opposition who felt that the introduction of offshore banking, exempt insurance company and stepping up on international business companies and foreign sales corporations would inevitably lead to dirty money coming into Barbados and all kinds of horrors. Well, that was not to be.

One of the greatest bits of satisfaction that I have had is to hear the Democratic Labour Party Government when they took over, boast of the contribution that the offshore sector was making to the economic development of this country. They actually boasted about it.

#### *Asides*

Mr. L. R. TULL: The Right Honourable Member for St. Michael South is saying that it is true and it is true! There was a phenomenal increase in the number of offshore companies whether there are offshore banks or exempt insurance companies or IBCs, there was a phenomenal increase in the number of these companies that have registered in Barbados over the past three years. I do not even want to make a political point about limiting it to three years. There has been a phenomenal growth in the number of...

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On a point of order. I really would not wish to challenge the competence of the Honourable Member for St. George South to speak in such matters but to interpret the statistics as presented by the Government whether in the economic report or otherwise, it is almost impossible to determine whether there had in fact been an increase in the numbers because what the numbers do not represent is whether it is a net increase. Some IBCs, as the Honourable Member for St. Andrew would know because he is a practitioner in this field of great note, go into abeyance and they stop paying licence fees and so on, so that no one would be as bold as to make the suggestion that there had been a sudden increase based on the statistics which the Government has provided. A lot of it has also been the necessary re-registration consequent to the amendment of the IBC Act which took place

some years ago, I think about four years ago, which has caused IBCs to have to be re-registered in Barbados.

Mr. L. R. TOLL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Honourable Member says that you have to be bold to stand by these things. I am bold enough to say that there has been a phenomenal increase in the registration of offshore companies in the last three years. That is a fact, Sir, it has nothing to do with re-registration. Every day of the week, these companies are being registered in Barbados and the figures are available in the Company Registry.

We have a situation, Sir, where the income to Barbados from the offshore sector has increased significantly and again, Mr. Speaker, these figures would not have increased apace, unless there was continuing registration at a great level because the income from offshore companies derive not only from the fees that are paid for registration in the Company Registry but the income is derived from things like real estate, leases, money paid to the Immigration Department for the relevant work permits, money paid to the accountants, money paid to the lawyers, all these things, not only the fees that are paid on incorporation of companies.

If I am to accept the published data in the various documents put out by the Government and its agency, there is no doubt at all, Mr. Speaker, that there has been a phenomenal increase in offshore activity in this country in the past few years.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On a point of order. The Honourable Member for St. George South simply does not know what he is talking about. The Government's own statistics, for example, in the 1995 Economic Report, there were 348 IBCs licensed but in 1993 there were 372, there has been no phenomenal increase and the House does not have to be treated to that kind of information because there has been an average increase every year of about 400 IBCs, on average; 1 171 in 1993, 1 486 in 1994, 1 834 in 1995, that means that each year the number of registrations has only increased by about 400 so there is no phenomenal increase. What is happening is that people are looking at the total numbers and therefore if it moves from 1 000 in 1991 to 2 000 in 1997, they are making the assumption that in 1997 we licensed 2 000 entities. That is not the way to read the statistics. They are cumulative and the Honourable Member for St. George South simply does not understand what he is talking about. It is as simple as that.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, I now understand why the country was in such great trouble when the Honourable Member for St. John was Minister of Finance. He does not understand basic figures. I am talking about new registrations. The number of new registrations of offshore companies has increased significantly for the past two or three years.

Mr. Speaker, I will move on. I will not be distracted by the Honourable Member for St. John.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member, I will suggest to you to get back to the Bill before the House, you have made your point, let us move on please. I have given you a lot of latitude.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, it seems almost as if the interruptions of the Honourable Member for St. John can pass by without comment, but I will move on.

During the last three years, Sir, a number of significant pieces of legislation in the offshore sector passed, like the Trust legislation, the Society and Restricted Liabilities legislation and others. I would like to suggest, Sir, that the sector is dynamic, things are changing rapidly and if one looks at the literature that comes out on the offshore sector including the things like the offshore business reports and so on, one will see, Mr. Speaker, that all over the world that new domiciles are being created rapidly, even here in the Caribbean it is being created rapidly and also, Sir, that the changes in the legislation in relation to the offshore sector continues to change at a fairly rapid rate.

In fact, I can think of no area of public endeavour where the change of the status of the sector is met with as much legislation as the offshore sector and naturally, the Government has to be continually cognisant of the change and must look at what is happening in the domicile of its competitors. No one, Sir, no one, if he or she is going to be fair, can contend that the Government of Barbados in the last two or three years has not been looking at what is happening in all areas relating to the sector, particularly in the area that require legislation, than has been going on in Barbados.

I want to thank the Honourable Member for St. Michael South who seek to put this debate in a better perspective by saying that this is a continuum, it is not a them and us situation. As I said earlier, both political parties should be committed to the development of the offshore sector. 12.20 p.m.

The changes that are necessary to be made in legislation in Barbados cannot be made by the Ministry or the Government going ahead and making the legislation without consulting with the main actors in the offshore sector. We have to be constantly dealing with the accountants for instance because the big five international firms of accountants have a very dynamic presence in the offshore sector and have a chance, from time to time, to see what is happening all over the world through their principals and bringing that kind of information into the general discussion before decisions can be made.

I want to make one further point, Sir, in relation to this offshore sector and it relates to the unpreparedness of much of the legal profession for the rapid changes that are coming about in this sector. There are very few lawyers in Barbados who are involved in offshore activity and the reason for this, Sir, is because it requires a lot of time, it requires resources, it requires the kind of international networking that would make them aware of the kind of changes that are taking place -and make themselves prepared and ready to take up this particular matter.

I just want to say finally, Mr. Speaker, that if it is one area of government activity where all sectors of the public and private community are agreed it is the offshore sector and it is unworthy of the Honourable Member for St. John to get up and throw out a few trivial criticisms only to establish that he has been going to some of the conferences and pick up a few of the developments.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member has constructed an entire speech in this Chamber on falsehood.

Mr. SPEAKER: What is your point of order, Sir?

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Therefore the Honourable Member cannot challenge me. I have to challenge him. I have in my possession the Central Bank of Barbados 1996 Annual Report.

Mr. SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: That the Honourable Member is misleading the House because this report on page 7 actually shows, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that in terms of the new registrations of, for example, IBCs that there has been a decline. Not the total number. In 1994...

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member, please. Just one minute. I said this earlier that I had given enough latitude relating to that point. Let us get back to the substantive motion before this House. You will have opportunity to have that kind of debate. This is not a debate relating to how many, when or where. This is a debate relating to the Bill that has been put before the House. Please!

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I will pass the Report to the Honourable Member for St. George South and he will read it for the first time in his life. That apart, on the point of order, Mr. Speaker, Sir, if you are making that ruling, then in my view, you cannot permit the Honourable Member to continue to cast aspersions on that part of my speech which you have ruled was not relevant to the debate. If he is going to question it then you have to allow me, Sir, to respond and demonstrate that the

Honourable Member has constructed a speech on falsehood, complete falsehood.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, I am sure you would be generous enough to let me react to a statement just made by the Honourable Member about me. This is questioning my own credibility and my integrity and if I am not allowed to reply to that, Sir, what are we here for. The Honourable Member gets up and says that with IBCs, for one year there has been a falling off of registrations. There are 5 significant areas of activity in the offshore sector and he cites one of them.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I was on a point of order and you stopped me from dealing with foreign sales corporation...

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please. Order.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: There are 6 major areas.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order please. Order. Please take your seat. This is the same thing I was suggesting we did not want to get to. We want to debate the Bill before the House. Both Honourable Members, I am sure you are aware that that is the case for another substantive motion and this is not the time nor the place for it. You have made your point about the 5 or 6. Could we move on?

Mr. L. R. TULL: I said 5, Sir, but he said 6 and that is a matter of substance for him. I am going to accept Your Honour's ruling and I will leave the debate as it is at this stage, Sir.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, it grieves me, Sir, that every Tuesday I enter this Assembly that someone on that side is representing the interest of the rich in this country. We are here, Sir, dealing with an Act that has been brought by a new Minister and instead of dealing with this particular Act, Sir, we are hearing the Back Bench on the Government side representing the interest of foreign sales corporations.

I want to know, Sir, after this Act is passed how many new airplanes will fly into this country bringing more tourist so that the poor people in this country, the fellows on the block will be able to get some work.

I want to know, Sir, when the Honourable Minister instead of spending over \$120 million to expand an airport would build an airport in St. Lucy so that the next time a President arrives in Barbados that the airport would not have to be closed down for 2 hours and 3 hours stopping tourist from coming into the country and that the planes be diverted to that beautiful constituency of St. Lucy.

I want to know, Sir, if poor people will not be represented by the Government in this Assembly because every Tuesday there is some kind of Resolution, some Act or somebody on the Back Bench who is prepared to get up here and defend the interest of other people. I feel that as parliamentarians we have a right to come in here and represent our constituents. We should not be in here acting as a lobbyist for the people in foreign sales somewhere in Bay Street or somewhere else who have a platform. I am saying Bay Street, whether it be an accounting firm or anything like that, that we as politicians should not be coming in here putting a case for those people. 12.30 p.m.

We must come in here and put a case for the fellows on the block and that is why I want to see something, Sir, where in this Act we hear that more planes will be flying into Barbados and more people will be employed especially the guys on the block.

But I will not come in here and put a case for people who would bring companies to Barbados to employ two people. I represent the small farmers down by that beautiful airport in St. Lucy. Civil Aviation is the name of it, Sir, which employs eight to ten people every day. That is my interest. But not to come in here and represent people who employ two people in a company and we get in here and brag.

Those people at Spring Hall, they contribute more to this economy than those people these people want to represent and put a case for. I am saying that it is distasteful for a young Minister who is presenting his first major piece of legislation to this Parliament and people come and side stepping the issue and dealing with other issues. But I will say no more at this time, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member. Are you winding up?

Hon. R. St. C. TOPPIN: Mr. Speaker, I am never sure how to respond to the Honourable Member from St. Lucy so on this occasion, Sir, I would not even try.

I note the concern raised by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South. It is perhaps the most worthwhile suggestion of the day and something which I was clearly contemplating. In fact, the new Act as amended should clearly exclude the Bills of Sale Act from applying to the issue of registration of mortgages in Barbados in future. That is a valid concern and certainly will be examined without delay.

With respect to other allegations made from the other side, and, first of all, I graciously accept the compliment paid to me on the one hand by the Right Honourable Member for St. Michael South. With respect to his other

suggestions for neophytes to go back and read files, I hasten to inform that I have gone back and read some files including the Carib Express file. I read that one with some intimacy and I noted who undertook to supply what amount of money, two or three days before the elections in 1994. And, how much money was pumped into an airline without a plan and the subsequent collapse of that airline, Carib Express. So, Mr. Speaker, I have read a number of files including the Carib Express file.

With respect to the concern of the Honourable Member for St. John speaking about a delay and who should bring a Bill, Mr. Speaker, he has no moral right to come into this Chamber talking about who is delaying an introduction of any Bill. Because, I have in my hand the same letter that was written to him as Minister of State, in which he likes to refer to people as junior members. I can make this a document of the House or available, if he wishes. The writer of the letter to him who was the attorney said to him:

"We have also been instructed by airbus to ask that in addition to waiving the stamp duty that urgent consideration be given to expediting the law reforms to make specific provision for the operation of a register of aircraft mortgages under the regulations."

And that was in 1992, Mr. Speaker. He has not emitted office up to now. But the government changed in 1994 and this came to his attention in 1992.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. He is giving the impression, Sir, that the Democratic Labour Party took so long to implement that Act and he said that we got the information in 1992 and we were in office up to 1994, Sir.

Anybody who can use figures can tell you that is two years, Sir. But from 1994 to 1997, Sir, is three years. So it means that in total it took five years and they took the greater part, Sir.

Hon. R. St. C. TOPPIN: I will repeat. The Honourable Member for St. John has no moral authority to complain because it was within his politics exclusively for a two-year period to make a change to a legislation, when he in particular was aware of the loss of business to Barbados. This only came to my knowledge since I became the Minister responsible for this. He knew that we had lost business in 1992 and in respect was requested urgently to deal with the matter, and took no steps whatsoever to deal with it over a two-year period.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On a point of order. The Honourable Member can get as hot under the collar as he wants to defend himself. But, to say I took no action

on it is grossly misleading because I met with officials of International Transport, a Ms. Bynoe, and she indicated to me what would have been necessary to amend the legislation. A memo was then written to the Minister of International Transport indicating that whatever we could do in the Ministry of Finance would be done to facilitate this matter.

The matter was therefore left for those technical amendments to be done. This has never been a Ministry of Finance's matter. It has always been a matter resting on the Ministry of International Transport. There was no action for a Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance or a Minister of Finance to take. It was a...

Mr. SPEAKER: You have made your point.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: ...matter for the Minister of Transport.

Hon. R. St. C. TOPPIN: The Honourable Member is clearly changing his story because he began by saying that the then Minister of Finance, the Right Honourable Member for St. Michael South assigned to him the task of bringing this issue in order.

*Aside.*

Hon. R. St. C. TOPPIN: That is what you said, and you were aware of the lost of business to this country as the Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance and you deliberately did not discharge your duties properly. So it does not lie in your mouth to come in here telling anybody about any delays.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Action was taken in the matter and I am challenging the Honourable Member for St. Michael North not to read only the letter that an attorney wrote to me, but to read all of the other correspondence on that file from the Ministry of Finance. Because you cannot say that nothing was done. The young lady who wrote it for me and you know the young lady who signed it. So you read the letter and spoke to me on the telephone on several occasions. In fact you called the wrong name. The substantive person in that Chamber who was dealing with the matter also sat down with me. So you get up and call that name too, since you like calling names. Because you think my memory has gone, but it has not gone.

Hon. R. St. C. TOPPIN: Mr. Speaker, the facts speak for themselves, and I am not really going to delay the Chamber on this matter any longer.

I beg to move, Mr. Speaker, that this Bill be read a second time.

*The question was put and resolved in the affirmative, without division.*

*On the motion of Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER seconded by Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair, and the House resolved itself into Committee, Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER in the Chair.*

## COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This Honourable Chamber is now in Committee.

*Clause 1 was called and passed.*

*Clause 2 was called.*

Hon. R. St. C. TOPPIN: I beg to move that an amendment be made to Clause 2 in that immediately under Part IV A, the tide which presently reads "mortgaging of aircraft" be amended to read "registration of mortgages of aircrafts."

It presently reads:

"The Minister may by order make provision for the mortgaging of aircrafts."

That should be amended to read:

"The Minister may by order make provision for the registration of mortgages of aircrafts."\*

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: I beg to second that, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is....  
12.40 p.m.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, just before it passes, I understand Sir, that the Companies Act relates directly in one way and indirectly in another to this. I see that according to the 1996 Annual Report of the Central Bank at page 7 that the number of international business companies in Barbados in 1993 were 1 171 and in 1996 they were 2 126. It says the number of licensed active companies increased by 1 000 between 1993 and 1996 and the foreign sales corporations increased by 900 to 1 700 between 1993 and 1996. Offshore banks increased by 40% over that period.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, I am trying to find out where this came in? You are dealing with the Companies Act.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Sir, I rise to speak on this amendment and I do not normally get into areas

where there are others who are confident or certainly more competent than I to speak on such matters. I rise to raise a legal point, Sir.

The Minister has moved an amendment which is an amendment of substance because the amendment purports to deal with the registration of mortgages for aircraft rather than the mortgaging of aircraft. We were a bit puzzled that the Minister wanted to mortgage aircraft. I wonder if in making that amendment whether he should not indicate that there would have to be some change also to the marginal note because the marginal note refers to mortgage of aircraft. I wonder if after 2 years this point missed him.

Hon. R. St. C. TOPPIN: The erudite member should note that it should in fact be amended to read to make provision for the registration of mortgages of aircraft as well

*The question that clause 2 as amended stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.*

*On the motion of Hon. R. St. C. TOPPIN seconded by Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON, Mr. Chairman reported the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.*

*On separate motions of Hon. R. St. C. TOPPIN seconded by Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON, the Bill was read a third time and passed.*

#### SUSPENSION

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: I beg to move that this House be suspended until 2 p.m. this afternoon.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: I beg to second that.

*The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. Speaker suspended the Sitting accordingly. 12.50 p.m.*

#### RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

*Order No. 4 was called - To move that the House resolve itself into Committee of Supply to consider the grant of sums of money for the service of Barbados.*

*On the motion of Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER seconded by Hon. G. W. PAYNE, the House resolved itself into Committee of Supply, Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER in the Chair.*

#### COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This Honourable Chamber is in Committee of Supply.

#### HEAD 36 - MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT - \$1 296 112

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, this sum is sought by the National Conservation Commission for the purpose of the further development and upgrading of Harrison's Cave. This national treasure was opened on November 20, 1981. It has a pedestrian traffic of 190 000 people per year and generates a total revenue of \$2.5 million.

It is the most visited site by tourists to Barbados and enjoyed equally by nationals, returning nationals and visiting nationals. In fact, the exit surveys done by the Ministry of Tourism clearly indicate that persons coming to Barbados, a visit to Harrison's Cave is their No. 1 activity of choice. That is true of long-stay visitors as is equally so of visitors who come in on cruise ships just for one day. Very frequently, before they would head to town for duty-free shopping or before they would do some other activity, they go to Harrison's Cave.

Therefore, Mr. Chairman, if we are to guarantee the sustainability of Harrison's Cave as a project to be enjoyed by nationals and continue to earn revenue for the Government and people of Barbados, it is required that we go about a redevelopment and operating process at this time.

This Supplementary comes very early in the year, the reason being that a loan from the Caribbean Development Bank to undertake some of the refurbishment and the feasibility studies for the speleological development of the Cave which was being sought has recently been approved by the Board of the Bank.

Now, earlier in the year when it came to Estimates, because this process was under negotiation, it was not clear to us what sum we would have to put in for this financial year and at what rate these monies would be utilised, or whether, in fact, the loan would be approved. It was thought we would not put it in at that time. Now, in fact, that the loan has been approved by the Board of the CDC, Government has to put up counterpart financing. We are seeking now to move roughly this \$1.3 million into the Estimates as our counterpart financing in relation to that loan.

I wish, Mr. Chairman, to speak in terms of what this money will seek to do in relation to the development of Harrison's Cave. First of all it is proposed that the feasibility studies for the development of the Cave

be undertaken. These feasibility studies will take 16 to 18 months and they will start shortly. What it is anticipated will happen is that the work so far done by MIT which has determined that there are, in fact, further caverns to the Harrison's Cave which can be explored and which we think can add to the attraction of the Cave, they will have further stalactites and stalagmites and other areas of interest and therefore enhance the size, beauty and the product that is the Cave.

We feel the preliminary work which went from August to December, and the report which was put in in December, clearly indicate that further exploration of these caverns should be done. This part of the money will be used towards the feasibility studies which will determine the scope of these caverns and let us know, in fact, whether it would be economically feasible to develop them because we would not want to invest tremendous sums into this project without knowing that we will, in fact, have some significant return on our investment, so we must do the exploratory work.

The upgrading of Harrison's Cave will also include institutional strengthening and some provision for the long-term developmental management of the Cave. Because when the Cave was initially opened, though it was anticipated that this would have been a tremendous revenue earner, the reality is that Harrison's Cave has far surpassed all expectations to the point now that any day a tram has broken down you get backups of hundreds and thousands of people waiting to get into the Cave.

If we are to guarantee Harrison's Cave as a national treasure, then proper management of that entity is a critical part of how its sustainability will be guaranteed. It is critical therefore that a management structure be put in place that will allow us not only to offer the best possible product to tourists but to ensure that this resource is properly managed.

In addition, we will look at the long-term sustainability of the Cave. It is going to be necessary that we implement, and we have started this, a proper programme for the cleaning and maintenance of the eco-system that is Harrison's Cave. The reality is that this is an underground cavern and every year if we put nearly 200 000 people in there breathing and so on, this does have some impact on this underground eco-system which would not normally in its natural state have human traffic. This kind of exposure, we know, does sometimes adversely impact the system.

Last year we had to close Harrison's Cave for a period to allow it some opportunity to renew itself, if I can use that expression, but just to allow it to breathe without any kind of traffic in it at all. Therefore, we have to determine what is the maximum carrying capacity of the

Cave and how many people we can put in there on a regular basis without adversely affecting the eco-system. We have to look at issues such as the water in there and the sources from which the water comes.

We know, Mr. Chairman, from recent works we have conducted that there are certain sources of pollution which impact on the Cave, such as pig farms within close proximity of the Cave, but we also have done other hydrogeological and hydrological work which tells us that pollution in the Cave, because of the drainage of that area, comes from much further afield. If we are to guarantee the quality of the Cave and ensure there is no pollution in the long-term, it is going to be critical that we understand the nature of the sources of pollution, the origin of the sources of pollution and we take such mitigating steps that are necessary to guarantee the Cave will come to no harm. That is part of what all of this process is intended to do.

It has in the past been part of the approach of Government not to involve, and I am not speaking now of any particular administration, communities nearby in Government projects that will impact on them in one way or another.

The Honourable Member for the City speaks constantly of the fact that the Central Bank is located at Church Village and that the communities around it are given little opportunity to benefit from its presence there, nor are they ever involved in any of the activity that goes on there. 2.15 p.m.

The reality is that when one seeks to integrate community into the developmental process, into the development of project then they think of the project as part of the community and they tend to care for it in a way which they would not do if they were ostracised and treated at some distance. Therefore, what we are going to be doing is developing a community-care project which would integrate the community around Harrison's Cave and give them a role to play when the Cave is fully re-developed.

We have moved our project office recently, because there is a project office which has been established to carry out this very important national work, and the project office is now located at Sturges House and we are going to be having opportunities there for the public to become involved.

*Asides.*

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: There will be tremendous physical works, apart from the Cave itself. During the course of my remarks earlier, I indicated

that the Cave had surpassed expectations and those of you who would have been to the Cave would be well aware that there is not sufficient reception area for the number of people who now visit the Cave, that the restaurant facilities are not adequate for holding the people who are there, that the bay at which one boards the tram again does not have adequate space.

We do not have adequate space for storage of the trams and if we are to make sure that people not only come, but that they are not hanging around on the outside when they are waiting to board the trams but can do so in comfort and perhaps participate in some other activity which could be revenue generating for us.

They are no shops there. One of the things that we would wish to do is to develop souvenirs which are exclusive to Harrison's Cave. This is one of the few places in the world where one goes and there are no mementos that one can take away. If one visits the Eiffel Tower one gets a miniature tower to carry home or something of the sort but the Harrison's Cave has nothing of that sort and it would be important for us to develop some kind of souvenir that is exclusive to the Cave. There will have to be shops that people can use, also activities that people can participate in while they are waiting to take their tours. Activities which on one hand generate revenue for us in terms of shops and so on and on the other hand activities that can be educational and informative to those people visiting.

The refurbishment of trams and the purchase of new trams will also be a component of the refurbishment of the Harrison's Cave. There are at the moment four trams, two which are sixteen years old and two of which are close in age to sixteen, I cannot give the specific age, they are not quite sixteen but are over ten years old. We have recently refurbished all four trams. They have had mechanical overall and electrical overall of their electrical system.

You will recall, Mr. Chairman, Sir, that there were several stories in the paper in relation to the unavailability of trams or the breakdown of trams and we recognise that if we are to guarantee that people can get into the Cave when they come to visit that we must have trams that are in good working order.

As you are aware, Mr. Chairman, we have promised that this will not be a controversial debate, so I will not state it otherwise, than to say that you are aware, Mr. Chairman, that there were trams that were previously ordered which could never have been used and which were not fit. So we are still dealing with the four old trams but we have had to upgrade them completely and they are all now working and we expect that they will be able to take

the full load during the Cropover season which is now our highest visitor period as well as during the coming winter season.

One new tram is currently on order and hopefully it will be in Barbados and available for use by the end of July. That tram is costing us some BDS\$270 000 and we are going to look at ordering additional trams if in fact, once this tram is delivered, we are satisfied with its performance when it gets here. In the last situation, I have said that I will not speak in a controversial way or in a manner to excite controversy from my friend from St. Michael East, but the reality is that on the last occasion that new trams were ordered all of the money was paid before the trams were delivered and when the trams got here, they could not work. What we have determined on this occasion was that part of the money would be paid. We have sent up our engineers to look at the trams and to be sure that the builders are following specifications and the rest of the money will be paid after the tram is delivered to Barbados and is found to be working.

We have by a process of analysis determined that the optimum number of trams for the proper functioning of the Harrison's Cave is six. With the four that we currently have and this new one which is on order, we will have five. So we will be at one below optimum. If we have six, it will allow us to keep one charged during the night to be able to rotate them in service while we do preventative maintenance and ongoing maintenance and so on.

One of the things at which we are looking is the fact that Harrison's Cave falls under the Ministry of Health and Environment. The use of fossil fuel is becoming increasingly unacceptable internationally and therefore if we are to lead and to give example to Barbados in relation to what can be done in an environmentally safe and friendly way, then we must try to use a form of energy which will not have any adverse impact on the Cave and which will not utilise traditional forms of energy.

In this context, Mr. Chairman, Sir, we are in discussion with Professor Oliver Headley because we are looking at having the new trams after the one that is on order, any that is ordered after this one, to use photovoltaic battery and photovoltaic energy. In a country that has so much sunlight, and where solar energy has proven to be so successful in relation to heating of water systems, there is absolutely no reason why we should not lead the way in the Caribbean in trying to use photovoltaic energy in avenues that we are now traditionally using fossil fuel. For the information of the Chamber, Sir, members may wish to know that the next Olympics in Australia will be done completely by solar energy and the Australians are already working on this because it is their intention to lead the world in solar energy.

In an island where we have natural sunshine so many months of the year and where we have so much to offer and have resident in Barbados one of the premier scholars in the world in this area, we are trying to make sure that this very learned man, who now chairs the National Commission on Sustainable Development, gives of his expertise and time for us to be able to develop the Cave in such a way that this form of energy is captured and utilised in the propulsion of our trams.

The electricals at the Harrison's Cave will also be upgraded. I inform the Chamber, with some embarrassment that since the Harrison's Cave was opened on November 20, 1981, that at no time has the Harrison's Cave ever passed Government Electrical Engineers Department's inspection. That is a reality.

We are going to try to ensure that the electricals at the Cave are upgraded in such a way that we can pass inspection. At the moment we are in a situation where cables to the Cave are running over people's grounds and they are exposed and we want to move to a situation where rather than having two electrical supplies which now exists that we have a proper integrated electrical supply, that the cables are not running over people's land where they put people at risk but they are properly buried underground.

We are going to install as part of the operating of the electricals a monitoring system which would allow us to be able to identify where in the Cave a tram is at anytime so as to avoid collision or accidents or if in fact there is a breakdown of the tram, then we know exactly what location it is at, rather than having to drive through the whole Cave to find it. 2.25 p.m.

If we are going to upgrade the electricals it makes sense to use the available technology in order to be able to access that kind of information.

It is anticipated that as part of this upgrading programme the workshop will be upgraded. We have recently taken on a new maintenance supervisor and I would have to admit that under his direction we have been able to get all of the trams working. I would have to thank him for his very excellent work and for the leadership which he has brought to his job. The workshop will be upgraded and expanded to be able to house the new fleet of trams which we will have and in order to be able to properly inventory and store disposables and other supplies in relation to the maintenance of the trams and other vehicles which are at the Harrison's Cave facility.

We will, as part of this upgrading exercise, extend the waiting area, the gift shop, the restaurant, the boarding area and the reception area and those I have spoken to already.

*Asides.*

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I am not addressing the Chair. I am speaking in terms of the full upgrading plant. This money here today represents our portion of the loan money which we got from CDB. This sum being voted today will not do all of the work. I am just detailing what the general plan is so that the Chamber would be aware and the rest of the money is going to come from another source.

There is, Mr. Chairman, at Harrison Cave no administration facility. We have people scotching, people who do not have adequate facilities. In fact it is unacceptable, in my view, that in an entity such as that, that people who want to purchase tickets to go on board the tram have to come through the General Manager's office. Now it is a terrible thing if you are trying to conduct a meeting or have a conversation in private or be looking at books or financial statements to have an office that has no degree of security, where people are commuting in and out all the time and tourists in their short pants passing and asking the Manager, where is the toilet. We must move to a situation where we are able to give the General Manager of this very important, national treasure the kind of office that befits a general manager of any professional entity. That is basic.

The refurbishing exercise will include, Mr. Chairman, an expansion of the car park facility. Very often on days when there is high traffic, particularly like Tuesdays when there are cruise ships here and there are a number of coaches and cars, the place is cluttered, you cannot get in or out and the language becomes colourful. Therefore we are going to expand the car park area to be able to hold 50 vehicles and we are going to green the car park because if the car park is on top of an environmental facility you want to have the place looking green and the whole area at St. Thomas really is a very green scape and being in such close proximity to Jack-in-the-Box Gully and the Welchman Hall Gully you want to have a car park that has trees and so on in it. We are going to green the area and expand the car park and make some provision for people to have more comfortable access than currently exists.

We have been trying to have discussions with our social partners in relation to this exercise. The tour operators as you would well imagine, Mr. Chairman, have a tremendous investment and interest in this matter because it is their consumers who are going to be significantly affected by any change, positive or negative, that is made at the Cave. We have been having discussions with them and we are going to continue to do so and to let them know what all our plans are because I believe that very often people will facilitate you and will be patient with you when there are difficulties or challenges if you allow them to know exactly what it is that you were trying

to accomplish. We are going to keep our communication lines open with the tour operators and the public in particular.

I would wish too to inform you, Mr. Chairman, that I have indicated what the scope of this project is in relation to Harrison Cave but I should tell you that the tremendous challenge of accomplishing all this will be to accomplish it while keeping the Cave open because it is our intention not to close the Cave while this expansion work is going on for obvious reasons. You will lose a tremendous amount of money. So we are currently developing a plan which will allow us to do it while the Cave remains open. Part of that will include that much of the work will have to be done at night and that does not matter because the cave is a dark entity anyway and you have to have lights to do it. So we can work equally well in the day or night. We are going to be doing it during the night.

This feasibility study will touch, Mr. Chairman, on two further areas which fall under the general administration of the National Conservation Commission. They are, the Folkestone Park and the Carlisle Bay area. I do not know how many people are aware that the Carlisle Bay area is the most dived site in Barbados. It is the site of 5 wrecks, some of tremendous antiquity which have now become very well encrusted with coral growth and coral formation and you can imagine how far the wrecks date back because coral grows at 1/8 of an inch per year and some of the wrecks are totally encrusted. As a result the waters off Carlisle Bay are rich with coral and rich with marine flora and fauna. We have at Carlisle Bay some species that are seen only two places in the world, here in Barbados, not even in the rest of the Caribbean, and in the Pacific Islands, fish like the Porcelain Frog Fish which are exclusive to Barbados and the Pacific Islands. We must develop some plan which maintains this very dived site. Carlisle Bay has perhaps as many as 100 000 per year. That is a tremendous amount.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member has one more minute to conclude her speech.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: It has also a number of antique bottles which are very precious and for which people like to dive so we are hoping to develop that area as a marine reserve and to look at the feasibility of developing also the Folkestone Park as a proper marine reserve.

I would wish, Mr. Chairman, to commend this project to the Honourable Members of this Chamber, to thank and commend for his effort so far, Steve Devonish, our Project Manager, who will have responsibility for delivering this to the Government and people of Barbados and to say, Mr. Chairman, that this is the kind of matter which I think the Government can and should have the support of the entire

Chamber and of all Barbados. I am much obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: I beg to second that, Sir. 2.35 p.m.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Chairman, this Resolution before the House today is not one that we on this side will consider to be contentious. The Minister need not have apologised for the fact that they have brought Supplementary Estimate No. 1 in June because the whole of Barbados has come to accept that the whole promotion that supplementaries will be a thing of the past went through the door two years ago and nobody believes the Barbados Labour Party when they said that there would be no more supplementaries.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: On a point of order, Sir. I would wish to observe that having a supplementary in June is not alien to this Chamber.

On June 16, 1987, the then government brought a supplementary before the House right after Estimates and right after the Budget so I am sure my learned friend, the Honourable Member for St. Michael East wants to go on to his next point. He tells me his asthma is giving him trouble, so he now wants to give me some.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Chairman, they tell me that June is too soon. But with regards to the Barbados Labour Party we are not surprised that they have started the process of bringing supplementaries and I am not trying to be facetious in any way, but I think it does suggest that there is to some extent a lack of planning within the Barbados Labour Party.

Because, clearly to the naked eye, it is obvious to all and sundry, as admitted by the Honourable Minister that Harrison Cave has, in fact surpassed all expectations and for all intents and purposes, needs to be properly refurbished and upgraded to suit the demands that will come to bear on the particular site.

So I am not so sure that we are going to achieve a lot in terms of spending money doing a large number of feasibility studies when we can look at the immediate needs of the entire project, Harrison's Cave.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: On a point of order, again, Sir. I would just like to make it clear that all of the money is not being spent on feasibility studies. The work that needs to be done in terms of the physical refurbishment is going to be prioritised and done while the feasibility studies in relation to the exploration of the new caverns will go on at the pace it takes to get them done.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Chairman, probably it would help if the Minister provided an actual breakdown of cost so that I could at least have a better gauge as to how the money has been proportioned and if you are able to do that then I would be able to gauge how you are going to approach the project.

Mr. Chairman, I want to say that it is necessary for us in Barbados to have attractions that will occupy the time or certainly entertain visitors and locals alike when they are in a state of recreation and I am sure that Barbados itself recognises that we have to have attractions that are appealing.

Now I am not so sure if this is not going to be an overkill in terms of Harrison's Cave when we seek to dig deeper into the Cave, because, the Cave as it stands right now is an attraction. Maybe, if we want to get into the Guinness Book of Records by having the longest Cave or something like that for marketing purposes, fine.

But, right now the immediate determination in Barbados cannot be prioritised based on further developing the Cave. What we have to do in Barbados is to look at how these projects can have an impact on the lives of Barbadians and how they can assist us. Not only as a facility to assist in the marketing of Barbados but we have to look at how we are going to integrate the people of Barbados into any programmes that we have in the future development of this country as it relates to tourism.

Now Barbados is a tourism destination. Harrison's Cave is an area where, as the Honourable Minister said some 190 000 visitors go to that site on a yearly basis. That in itself is a tremendous market for local Barbadians to have access. But what is happening right now is that you have an area that is congested because of a small car park. As you explained quite rightly, the restaurant facilities are totally inadequate. There are people waiting around in a state of confusion, frustrated because they cannot get into the Cave, and what we need to do in Barbados to assist in the alleviation of that problem is not to do feasibility studies, but to have a forum where Barbadians can entertain or interact whether it is the vendors, whether they can have access to the market...

*Asides.*

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: What I am saying is that we need to do it and to do it in haste. Because, many of the vendors right now in the Bridgetown Port, are being denied access to the visitors at the point of entry. As they come through the arrival hall there is a series of duty free shops and where the taxis are located, they do not access the area where the vendors are unless they are pulled in or deliberately want to go to the vendors.

So what I am saying is that we have a golden opportunity at Harrison's Cave where you have almost 200 000 people and I believe the amount will grow to allow Barbadian artists, as I have seen in several countries where they have three shows a day, to display different Barbadian talents, while people are waiting to go into the Cave. The Cave itself is an attraction and it will pull people to the area. What I am saying is that during the day you can probably look at the possibility of having two or three shows. One at 10:00, 1:00, 3:00, or whatever time is appropriate. And, while people are doing one thing or waiting for the Cave, you piggyback on the whole system and you are entertaining them, somewhat like a mini theatre. I have seen it in England, in the United States and if they can do it we can apply the same principles in Barbados.

I am not going to quarrel and I hate to think that I am perceived to be just attacking the Minister. I heard the Minister in Oistins crying that she is always under constant attack because she is a woman. That is not true. I do not worry about your hair style, I do not worry about the wardrobe you wear. I do not worry about anything like that. I just worry about you, the person who is the Minister of Health and the Environment. So, if I say anything, I am not attacking you personally. I am attacking what is going on in your Ministry.

So on this occasion, I really have to confess that you are a lot more thorough in your approach to this matter at hand and I am going to urge that we seek to spend the bulk of the money in the immediate refurbishment of the area and try to put a package in place that Barbadians can benefit by Harrison's Cave. Because right now, Barbadians really are not benefiting from Harrison's Cave. The artists in Barbados do not have a forum on which to express themselves.

The visitors come here off the cruise ships for one day and there is no cultural explosion for them. They cannot go back and say that "I witnessed Barbadian talent at its best," and we have to move to develop other attractions and do not necessarily throw all of our eggs in one basket. 2.45 p.m.

I have said in this House of Assembly on more than one occasion that Barbados has to develop a number of attractions. When you look at the varied forms of the market available to Barbados, when we look at diving - I understand the argument about diving and the marine park. That is something that has been going on for a long time. In fact, Carlisle Bay has been in the process of developing that park for some 10 years or longer. There is a huge market for diving tourism and visitors will come to Barbados specifically to go to marine parks and things like that.

We need to spend some money in these areas. I am not too worried that it is going to take 16 to 18 months because at that time the Democratic Labour Party will form the Government and we will be in a position to...

*Asides.*

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: I am being very realistic that by the time this feasibility study is completed we would be in a position to implement and to have a sustained plan not only just to focus on one particular area but to look at the total development of attractions for the Barbados product.

I am going to wish the Ministry very well in this exercise. I certainly will urge you to try at the earliest convenience to do something about the immediate conditions. They are very bad and it is causing a lot of problems. I understand the problem you are going through and it really is an ugly sight. I know it is not the present Minister's fault but, as you have said, the project has overtaken itself and we have to go to another stage. I am not knocking the Ministry in this regard because I recognise that we have to develop it and I am saying that we can develop it to the extent that we start pulling the cultural artists into the whole exercise. I hope that we can have a project that will be sustainable, that cannot only sustain revenue for the Government but also assist the artists to express themselves and give the visitors a chance to witness good Barbadian talent.

I am going to wish the Ministry well and hope that you can get the electrical repairs done. I am quite shocked to learn that it never passed the Government Electrical Department. That is quite amazing. I do not think many places in Barbados would get away with that. I wondered why when you go deep into the cave that all the lights are suddenly shut off.

*Aside.*

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: I thought that was an electrical problem. I am glad to hear that it is part of the show.

Mr, Chairman, I really would give this Resolution my blessing today and I believe the other members on this side will understand, even though we recognise that it is the beginning of what we suspect to be a long process of supplementaries in this financial year. We are certainly left with one impression that clearly the present administration have confirmed that they are not good planners, they are not good budgeters and they are not good forecasters.

Sir HAROLD St. JOHN: I would like to rise to give my support to this expansion of what is after all one of a major tourism project in the whole of the Caribbean. Harrison's Cave when it was developed was the unanimous decision of successive administrations. We have been

fortunate to experience a public sector project which has succeeded beyond the imagination of many. It illustrates that there is still an important role to be played by the public sector because if we had to wait for the private sector we would not have a Harrison's Cave. There is no doubt about that.

I believe that having become successful that it is probably one of those areas that you will soon hear a clamour for privatisation now that the groundwork has been laid.

I would also like to say that one must look at Harrison's Cave, its geographical situation in particular, in relation to the development that has gone along around that area. Not only is there a Harrison's Cave but there is a gully, Welchman Hall Gully, where there is also developing in that area a number of other projects. I believe that you will see some examples of basketry and a number of other craft activities which take place in Bloomsbury and Welchman Hall area.

I would hope that subject to the solution of the problem that one does have around the Cave, namely the problem of providing proper sanitary facilities, having regard to the fact that there can be some seepage in the area, that one will see in that area an expansion of physical facilities which would be able to expose a number of the people who now make their living in that area to the greater market that is generated by the thousands of people who visit Harrison's Cave.

There is a limitation from my memory in the expansion of the vending area in that there is a problem in respect of the provision of adequate facilities having regard to the numbers and to the nature of the physical conditions.

Now, Sir, I often wish to point out that while we have a tendency to criticise many things in Barbados many people fail to realise that we have made tremendous gains in the provision of facilities for our visitors particularly the day visitors. Many day visitors that we get to Barbados tell you that they are surprised by the diversity of attractions that there are in Barbados.

What I would like to see and this is one of my primary reasons for speaking is that greater recognition be given by the public to the outstanding contributions in the preservation and the enhancement of these facilities by the public of the work that the National Conservation Commission performs. I used to have a lot to do with the work of the National Conservation Commission. It used to be called Parks and Beaches.

I want to remind Honourable Members, particularly younger Honourable Members, that most of the

beach facilities in Barbados now are beach facilities that have been generated as a result of the activity of the National Conservation Commission. We are not finished in that direction.

I want the Honourable Minister to be bold enough to persuade her colleagues to come back to Barbados at a very early date because there are a number of these facilities which need a hand. When I hear people say that Barbadians are being crowded out I wish to remind them that this Government made sure by the acquisition of beach facilities in many areas of Barbados that there would be spaces available.

We can expand. We have the whole of the Bay Street area. We also have to be bold enough to take public money and acquire property in order to enhance the beach facilities in Barbados. We must do that. The National Conservation Commission is the agency.

We have to enhance the St. James, St. Lucy and northern areas. Money spent in that area is money well spent in providing...

The Honourable Member must not interrupt me in this area because he should listen. He has an imperfect understanding of the fundamental work that has been done in this area. His historical knowledge is deficient in this area. The fact of the matter is that greater access was to have been provided for the whole of that area around Holetown. A decision was taken to convert some time ago the back of the monument, an area which was one of the prototypes of the vending area, into a restaurant to be run by a German. I did not make that decision. I know that it was made and when it was made. I think it was generally conceived that that was a mistake.

We must go further than that. We must be bold now. We must go to the Speightstown area. I know that a decision was made to remove that pathway that ran along the whole of the Hey woods beach in exchange for access on the northern side of Heywoods. 2.55 p.m.

I know that decision was made. I think Honourable Members on that side should enquire who made that decision. All I know is that the whole area between Speightstown and Heywoods was created specifically to ensure that we would have along that St. Peter coastline a development of the type that you see in Latin America in which the buildings are on the land side of the road, the whole of the seaside belongs to the public and vending can take place on the seaside in very controlled conditions.

I know that is what we intend to do in Bay Street. When I say I would like to see from Bay Street starting from the beginning of the Police Sports Club right down to

where the Innisses used to live all cleared, that area lends itself to that type of development also.

Sir, I only intervened also to point out that in the Christ Church area, the St. Lawrence/Worthing area, I am very glad to see that a new development is taking place there. I had the pleasure of going to see it recently. It is going to be a fantastic eco-tourism project. There will be a bird sanctuary.

Barbados has, in fact, been utilising such a small number of natural facilities we have to the hilt. This is the development that is taking place, but we are too negative with ourselves. We ought to be giving encouragement for the execution of these projects. Be bold enough to acquire land for beach accesses.

My last point is, Sir, that I hope to see the development of the southern area of Barbados, particularly that area between Oistins and the airport. There is absolutely no doubt about it. That is a most natural area for water sports of the active type, kayaking, windsurfing and things of that kind.

We have, Sir, the area which you are very familiar with. We have 20 odd acres of land in Silver Sands acquired just after the hurricane in 1955. Work is now being done. Part was started with the Arawak Village. We are also now trying to improve the small playing field there to prevent over-utilisation but that is a big picnic site parallel to the one at Rockfield in St. Lucy so that the people in the north can come to the south and the people in the south can go to the north.

The point is these are very large areas of land. I commend the National Conservation Commission but I would like to see them funded. I would like to see a bold policy and I would like to see the beach accesses in Barbados totally and actually expanded. It is going to cost money but it will be money well spent.

Of course, I am one of those who believe that in the East Coast area you have a wonderful opportunity to maintain the prohibition of building houses on the seashore and allowing them to build on the land so that when you drive along there you have the whole vista of the seacoast. Maybe that is what needs to be done right up to St. Philip Lighthouse so we would not have to tolerate the situation where we have a parish that has been represented by the highest office in the land for many years still at this period of time being classified as the area where there is the most poverty in Barbados. I want to see something done about that too, Sir, because that is a beautiful area.

*Aside.*

Sir HAROLD St. JOHN: The Honourable Member does not know. If he had a sense of history, he would know that it used to be the boast of a former representative out there that that was the condition the people loved. If the Honourable Member studies the history in here he would have seen those statements were made.

The last thing I want the National Conservation Commission to do is to update the map. There is a map in the Archives of the National Conservation Commission which shows every access there is in Barbados for the public to the beaches. I know that map. It was during my time it was created when the Chairman of the Parks and Beaches Commission then was the late Iris Bannochie. I want that map updated. I want it published because if the public knows of these things then a lot of what you hear about Barbadians not having any access would be removed because we need more, but we do have a lot of public access.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, one thing about the Honourable Member for Christ Church South is that he makes negative remarks about myself but he continues to repeat everything I say. I remember, Sir, when we were dealing with the Rural Bill I said one grave error that was made in Barbados was when the hotel owners on the West Coast were allowed to build the hotels on the seaside and not on the land side. I am extremely happy to hear the Honourable Member for Christ Church South making those same comments in this Assembly today.

I am also proud to hear him saying that places like Cove Bay, Stroude Bay, the Naval Base, Fryer's Well and all those areas beyond the Judge Gap that they have a right to be beautified and that some of the money the NCC is prepared to waste elsewhere that cannot attract tourists that it would be a good thing if they developed those areas and made them good attractions. I would like to thank the Honourable Member for Christ Church South for making those generous remarks about St. Lucy.

As you know, Sir, you would have read a news report on CBC where there was a complaint that all the tracks that led to the beach are in need of repairs. I called also at that time on the Honourable Minister to make sure that when people travel from all over Barbados and they go to places like Cove Bay, River Bay, Stroude Bay, Archers Bay, Fryer's Well Bay, that when they are finished picnicking I feel they are duty bound to make sure they remove the garbage instead of leaving that garbage all over those beach areas in St. Lucy.

I have been written by the Chairman of NCC asking for areas to be beautified and I believe most parliamentarians would have been written with the same request. I have responded giving areas I would like to be beautified in Barbados but I am yet to see enough action

happening in St. Lucy. I am under the impression now, Sir, that any time I am written by anybody asking me about anything to be done in my constituency that the best thing I could do with that correspondence is to put it in file 13 because they are wasting my time. I have better things to do. If you are going to write me asking me to submit proposals to you and then there is no action, you could as well do not write me,

*Aside.*

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: You can tell anybody because you can also tell some in your Ministry because I have written on many roads in St. Lucy to be repaired and constructed and nothing has been happening. I am saying that if we are dealing with NCC that NCC has a right to clean beaches in St. Lucy too. 3.05 p.m.

That is the relevance to this debate that no Minister should feel that because they might be a personal conflict somewhere that they are going to give instructions that places in St. Lucy should not be cleaned. I am saying that Fryer's Well Bay and places like that should be cleaned.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: On a point of order Mr. Chairman, Sir. The implication of what the Honourable Member just said whether deliberately or otherwise is that instructions have been given that St. Lucy should not be looked after by the N.C.C. because of some personal conflict. I do not know if it is as a result of thought, lack of thought or total control of his brain or tongue, or both but it has to be withdrawn, I will not tolerate it.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, in a debate in this Assembly in December when we were discussing debushing for Barbados, I was told in this Assembly that none of this money is for me and that is part of N.C.C.

*Asides*

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: The money is not for me, the representative of St. Lucy. They said that nothing would be done in St. Lucy. If you are going to say that I am misleading this House, we would have to go back to Hansard. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South said that you cannot say that. He corrected the person so no one challenges me when I am speaking about these matters. I am saying that they said not one cent for St. Lucy.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, I asked the Chair to rule and the Chair has not ruled. I am under tremendous assault. It cannot happen. He is getting on like a loose cannon giving no direction to anything in his mind, accusing me of all kinds of incorrect records of this House and telling bare lies.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. I did not gather that the Honourable Member was speaking derogatorily of the Honourable Member for St. James South.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: If any of the remarks are derogatory, I withdraw them, Sir, but the facts remain the same, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Members can dispute the facts but I cannot recall anything derogatory.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, I am also saying that the N.C.C. has a right to protect the environment in Barbados. They have a social responsibility to protect the environment in Barbados and I am saying that I will be writing the N.C.C. shortly because when ever I pass on the road to the highway going to St. Lucy, I am picking up a smell coming from up on a hill near to Arch Hall and that is not good for the environment of Barbados. I thought the days of that smell had passed after the days of Mount Stinkeroo.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member is going a bit wide on this issue. You are going a bit wide.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I will get back to the point, Mr. Chairman, but neither will I ask why material would leave Mangrove to go back to Greenland. I will not ask that. I will get back to the debate on Harrison's Cave. As I said, Sir, when it came from Greenland it used Highway 1, when it went back it went back through the back but I would not deal with that, let us deal with Harrison's Cave.

Mr. Chairman, we are about to make a serious error in this country. The Minister got on the Floor of this Assembly today and admitted that over 190 000 people are visiting the Harrison's Cave. Good figures, Mr. Chairman. She went on to say that the management facilities, the parking facilities and the shopping area facilities are lacking. I agree with her but she also went on to say that there will be a feasibility study for 16 months to tell her exactly what she knows and what you know and what everybody in this Assembly would know.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: On a point of order. I did say that the feasibility studies related specifically to the exploratory work of the underground caverns in relation to the Cave and the economic viability of the marine reserves. It was not to tell us what we know in relation to the need for expansion of the physical facilities but I did limit what the feasibility studies were about and I was also very clear to say that while the feasibility studies on those specific areas were going on that the physical refurbishments that were needed as a matter of urgency would be undertaken.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, the problem with the Democratic Labour Party and I must say this today, is that when they have projects to do, as you know the Harrison's Cave was started by the Democratic Labour Party, we must make sure, Sir, that all of our projects are implemented before the Barbados Labour Party touches them. I will tell you why. The Harrison's Cave was a project of the D.L.P. They left that project and it was badly constructed. I will tell you why. The power at the Harrison's Cave has nothing to do with the size of the Cave. The problem is that the parking area at Harrison's Cave is wrong. The building that they call the office structure and the restaurant and the holding area, all of that is wrong. Where the car park is, Sir, the shops and the offices etc. should have been there and people going to Harrison's Cave should have been made to walk in passing by shops owned, by poor people in this country.

I am saying that if we are going to be spending money on Harrison's Cave and we are not coming with a project like this, we could shut up and go along home. It will be a waste of taxpayers money. I am saying that all the tourists coming into Harrison's Cave should come from up the hill, walk through and see the booths etc. and then go into the Cave and the office should be where the car park is; the car park should be up on the hill.

We have the capacity of making Harrison's Cave project one of the biggest projects in Barbados and I am not talking about the number of people visiting the Cave of itself but I am talking about the number of people shopping within the shops outside of Harrison's Cave before they get actually into the Cave and that is what we call projects that can create employment for people. If you are just going to go and waste money and at the end of the day you come back to square one we can just shut up and go along home, Sir.

I am saying that 190 000 people going in any particular area, that they are a lot of people, and we need to tap those people, tap their resources and allow them to leave a lot of it in Barbados because the Honourable Member for Christ Church South is not in his seat but I am going to make this point. What he said about setting up booths along the West Coast and the South Coast sounds pretty but it cannot be a good policy when you are pushing all inclusive tourism in this country. What you would need to do is to re-think your decision on tourism and that policy will be a good policy.

I am saying, Sir, that Harrison's Cave, if it is planned properly, that it has potential for employing a lot of people and making a lot of poor people independent and that is why I am in this Assembly to make sure that the poor people in this country get a share of the cake and that there is some independence to them, that they do not have to wake up every morning and go begging for jobs at

other people. I know that the Honourable Member for the City would support that too.

I am saying, Mr. Chairman, that we need not look at politics the way the C.D.B. looks at politics because the only interest the C.D.B. has in a project like this is lending money and making a good return. And I have repeated on the Floor of this House that when it comes to these international banks, I do not have too much respect for them for the simple reason that their agenda and our agenda is not the same and I will always relate the story of the sugar industry where when these people want to pass off loan they pass it off on poor countries especially at a time when they feel the reserves are good.

I am saying that whoever is signing this loan on behalf of the N.C.C. and most likely it would have to be the Minister of Finance, that he must make sure that it is in the interest of Barbados and not in the interest of C.D.B. because C.D.B. has a pass record of passing off bad loans on countries, the same way they did it to the sugar industry, they will do it to the Government of Barbados and we have to be careful. I am challenging the C.D.B. to make sure that the interest of Barbados is put first and not the interest of C.D.B.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3.15 p.m.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Chairman, it is amusing how, in this Chamber we take very important debates and treat them with a sort of casual *laissez-faire* kind of attitude. The question of refurbishing and upgrading Harrison's Cave at this point as we look down the road really is loaded with a lot of technical issues, financial issues, economic issues. Really at the heart of the debate ought to be what is the optimum size of the Cave and although it is a simple question it requires a lot of information to determine that. There are obvious constraints. The product in itself at Harrison's Cave will be limited by its own capacity, that is, there is so much we can do for Harrison's Cave and no more. A simple law that supply creates its own demand may not necessarily hold, that in attempting to expand and refurbish Harrison's Cave it may not necessarily be doing so with any beneficial effects in terms of the demand for the product. In fact it may be the case that not even to refurbish Harrison's Cave will still see an expansion in the demand for the product over time based on the fact that you get increased tourist arrivals, there is some fascination about the cave.

I have really entered the debate to ask a number of questions and not in any way to be provocative. Is this entity Harrison's Cave a profitable one at this point in time? I am not aware and I do not know whether or not it is a profitable entity. I do not know whether or not we can say it would be so in the future either. So I need to ask

questions because these questions which I intend to ask ought to inform what the optimum size of the cave should be. Certainly the whole question of pricing of the product at the Cave is critical given that we have now reached the stage where during the summer months we have had increased growth in Cropover and as a result tourist arrivals. Should it not be the case that the price should vary according to season and based on the overall cost of business over the course of the year? That is, is it appropriate to have one price at Harrison's Cave for the entire year or should we not have a differential in price based on demand or peak load? Should it be the case that we should be using just an average cost across the years? Does not cost at Harrison's Cave vary with the season? If so then again we have to factor in all of these considerations into determining what the future size of the Cave should be.

It is also important to note that any expansion of the Cave, that is, the physical size of the Cave, I am not talking about the services outside in terms of the restaurants and the administrative buildings and the like, that any expansion of the cave itself is going to mean increased cost over time and in fact should we not be concerned about that aspect of it? Is the expansion going to require 5 or 6 trams? Have we determined this on the basis of the existing size of the Cave, or are we looking to the future in terms of making a decision on how many trams we should have at the Cave? Those kinds of questions, as I said are critical to the overall determination of where we are going with this expansion and refurbishing.

It is not surprising that the Cave has not indeed even been inspected or passed the electrical requirements. That is also true of many hotels in Barbados. There are many hotels in Barbados which cannot pass electrical inspection. There are many hotels in Barbados which have been wired and have been put together in the 1960s and they are no longer appropriate in the 1990s and we have more or less overlooked this problem in Barbados.

We have said since we cannot afford to close down hotels because it will affect employment and foreign exchange earnings and the works that we will see that and let it slide, but several properties, especially on the South Coast of Barbados cannot pass inspection for electrical purposes and that is known in the industry.

I am not at all surprised that the same exists at Harrison's Cave. What they should be thinking of doing in today's new world is to be looking for a system by which we can upgrade the properties, especially on the South Coast, and find ways and means to assist these properties so that they can become eligible for the passing. Not only that but there is no way in which we can expect that they can compete in a new tourism environment without

being able to offer certain services and without being fully computerised. Certainly the electrical systems that presently exist in those areas are woefully inadequate.

The actual designed provision outside of the Cave would have been conceptualised as far back, I think, as the late 1970s and it is not surprising again that the thinking at that time could not have envisaged that this particular entity could have grown at the kind of rate that it has grown over the years because I am saying that even in terms of our overall tourism that I am not so sure that when we started out that we were anticipating the kind of rapid growth, albeit with some slow down in the eighties of tourism.

Again consideration should have been and would have been, and for the future, could be given to upgrading the facility as a part of the overall development of the Cave whether they are thinking in terms of doing it every 5 or 10 years. So there is in fact need for a more structured approach so that the feasibility studies that are being considered should not be only thinking in terms of the physical environment and the upgrading thereof but also thinking in terms of what provisions can be put in place for the further systematic development of the Cave itself in the next 20 to 25 years and not just have this sort of hodge podge arrangement where you decide on the basis of some person reporting that something needs to be done at the Cave when it can actually be incorporated into an overall development plan for the Cave itself. This is time to look to the future and time to avoid the political ramblings.

This is an extremely important issue for Barbados. It is an extremely important issue not just from the point of view of the politics of it but from the point of view of offering the public service of Barbados an opportunity to truly demonstrate that there is reform within the public sector and to give the young members of the public sector opportunities to show what they have learnt across the various universities rather than to have them there doing very routine mundane stuff which is now the order of the day for most young people in the public sector.

Certainly no one at this stage can be satisfied having come from years of study, years of acquiring a knowledge to do the very routine things from the 1940s in the public sector. Here is an opportunity therefore for the Government not only to speak to the issue of public sector reform but to offer quantifiable opportunities, that is something that is tangible for people to work with. 3.25 p.m.

Now there is no doubt at all that the overall objective of the Cave should be to make a profit notwithstanding that it is providing a service within the tourism sector. The overall objective of the entity should be a profit motive because in the absence of that then all that this entity will

do is to be parasitic to feed off of the resources derived from other sectors of the Barbadian public.

And, since there is apparent evidence that it can be profitable and since there is an understanding of the integral role that it has been playing and continue to play in the overall tourism development, then this entity should be seen more in terms of its capacity to generate not only revenue but to generate profit.

So it must be treated not only as providing a social service but more importantly as providing a good that has some value. In short therefore, our concerns for the Harrison's Cave ought to reflect what is or what would be the optimal size of the Cave for the future. In that regard I will just summarise by saying what that will constitute. A constraint in terms of what the physical environment offers. That is there is no way that we can expand the Cave *ad infinitum*. It is not that kind of a product. It has a limit in terms of its size and we ought to be able to determine what that limit is.

There is some way in which we can determine the revenue that we can derive from that Cave and since there is a maximum limit to the size of the Cave it will obviously have to be some limit to the use of the Cave. So that while we can boast about 190 000 people visiting the Cave for the last year or whenever the information was available, we cannot expect in the future for this growth to continue because they will be an obvious limit to the amount of people who can go into the Cave. I cannot determine that from here.

In addition to that, I am saying that since there is a limit on the amount of people that can utilise the Cave over the course of a year, then there is even more consideration that needs to be given to the pricing arrangement because that is the other side of the revenue for government. So the pricing arrangement has to be critical in the overall projection of revenue for the Harrison's Cave. I have suggested that there is no apparent reason why there should be one price over the entire course of the year when there are variation in demand for the Harrison's Cave. Because there is seasonality of tourism.

So there can obviously be a seasonal price based on whatever considerations you give to determining that pricing mechanism for the Cave. You can make all the suggestions that you wish to make. Again, on the other side of the coin since there is an optimal size to the Cave then there has to be consideration for the cost involved in future development of the Cave.

Therefore, costing of the Cave in terms of what it will cost Government to run when it needs renovations and upgrades will have to be critical in determining the future size of the Harrison's Cave.

I end by saying, as I started, again, I am amazed that an apparent simple supplementary to discuss where we are taking Harrison's Cave should not be attended by a simple application of thought. There is greater need in this debate to give attention to the very critical issues that will determine the overall outcome of the size of Harrison's Cave and its overall profitability within a future Barbados. It cannot be seen to be living on the support of the public purse, but must be in itself an entity of which we can all be proud.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am pleased to support this resolution. Happy to see it before the House.

As the Honourable Member said when she introduced it, Harrison's Cave is the most visited site in Barbados. It is the first choice of the majority of tourists to Barbados. The first choice as she said, of visiting friends and relatives in Barbados. When we opened the Cave, many years ago, I do not think any of us at the time had the slightest idea, as to the growth potential of it, and it is not the Cave by itself.

The Cave occurs at a certain convergence where we have the Welchman Hall Gully, we have the Flower Forest, and I would venture to suggest now, Sir, we will soon have Greenland.

Greenland is going to become indeed a green lovely land and valley in St. Andrew. I have no doubt about that. I have seen for myself. That triangle, in particular, which falls at the junction of three parishes in Barbados, is a very special treasure of Barbados.

There are two special thrusts which we are making in tourism now, at this time. Not only Barbados, I must state Sir, that this is not peculiar to us. In other places in the world it is so. Heritage tourism. Very big everywhere in the world and very big particularly with the tourist who come to us from our major market the United Kingdom and Europe. Very big, heritage. Nature based. Some people may wish to refer to green tourism, eco-tourism, but nature based, is another special area of thrust for us.

We had thought for all the years that because we did not have tropical rain forest and because we did not have the kind of jungle that you would see in Central America and parts of South America and even certain places in the Caribbean, we did not have forest, like Trinidad or even in Dominica, the rain forest, that somehow, nature based tourism was not something that we could promote. But we have been cured of that mistaken view, Sir. And, we understand now what a magnificent heritage we have in

terms of natural beauty and sites that visitors and Barbadians alike, would like to visit.

The Tourism Development Programme, Sir, which is very much on the way now, has a special component in it, subprogramme C which is dealing largely with heritage and nature based tourism and they have a very special subcomponent dealing with the Graeme Hall Swamp.

Harrison's Cave, Mr. Chairman, Sir, and what we know of it now, is only the beginning. As the Minister rightly said, there are many other caverns. We are led to believe that there are a network of tunnels that may go right down through the gullies into Speightstown and the possibilities, I mean the potential for that is beyond belief. People go down visit the Cave and come back and say it was hard to believe that we were in Barbados. It is said to be one of the most beautiful caves in the world.

As I was just saying to the Honourable Member for St. Michael East, what we have to learn to recognise in Barbados, is that, the world have developed itself into major trading blocks. Little countries like us cannot shake the tree and expect a lot of apples to fall. We have to look to carve out little niches for ourselves and nurture those niches. And, we know how to do it and we must stop second guessing ourselves, and peeping up under ourselves about this and go out there. 3.35 p.m.

We know we have a good product. We like to say in Barbados that we have the best. Others may say that they have better, but we like to think that we have the best. We have to carve out those niches, burnish and nurture them, and treasure them. Nature needs careful handling.

Again, we never thought that just the presence of humans in the Cave would pollute the cave. That is what we are doing. Mother Nature is not polluting herself. It is we who do this. I am particularly pleased to hear that this is an important aspect of future management of the cave; that there may be some weeks or even a month during the year where the cave will have to rest so that it can breathe and recuperate from the effect of ourselves as polluting agents there.

I am also very pleased to hear that the Minister is actively involved in seeking to find ways to bring the community into the functioning and the sustainability of the cave. Too often in Barbados, we have the situation where people feel alienated from the very systems, the very structures, the very development, that was put on the ground for their especial benefit. You put a building on the ground, you put an institution on the ground, you develop something and the Cave was like that, but people feel alienated from it. When people feel alienated from it, it

is not a difficult next step for them to be destructive in their attitudes and their actions towards it.

I think that once we sensitise people to the special national treasure that the cave is we will see a completely different attitude in and around the environs of the cave. People will begin to feel protective of it. It is part of the national patronage. It belongs to all. We are only holding that in trust for future generations.

I have made the point in here before and at risk of making it again *ad nauseam*, I make it again. There was a time way back in the midst of antiquity when Barbados was in a manner of speaking two islands. You had the coral terraces on the west coast and on the south coast where most of us live and then you have on the east coast different geological formations. You have oceanic upthrust and there was a time when there was a channel of water running through there between what is now the St. George Valley. As it all rose, you have what we know as Barbados today.

That St. George Valley is still the place where the finest coral stone continues to be quarried. All the stone in this Honourable Chamber, this entire building was quarried out of that valley. It is the best quality in Barbados and still to be found along that join. In the join you will find occlusion and this is where the Caves in Barbados occur. Not only in Harrison's Cave.

When we were going to school, at least in my time when I was going to school, we would talk about Harrison's Cave and Cole's Cave and that there were many other Caves, most to be found in St. Thomas. Those Caves are occurring at the join.

Go down Harrison's Cave and, bearing what I am saying in mind, you can look up actually into the huge cathedral ceilings and you can see what is oceanic upthrust on one side and what is coral stone on the other. I am not a speleologist, Mr. Chairman, Sir, but I have an interest in all sorts of things and this has been of particular interest to me for a very long time and it continues to be.

I think that what we need to do is to think in terms of developing this network of Caves. Mr. Chairman, Sir, cruise passengers have now overtaken long stay in Barbados in terms of raw numbers of arrivals. Over half a million cruise passengers come to Barbados and the majority of them choose the Cave. The way that cruises work the various tours that you can make are presented to you when you are on board. They do film presentations of the various places and then people make their choices.

I have cruised the Caribbean over many years on several occasions and I notice every time that every island where you stop there is always some major -natural

attraction that the majority instinctively seem to go for. In Barbados, it is Harrison's Cave. People now come from all over the world.

I do not think that we have any concept of how highly regarded some of those little niches in tourism that we are carving out now are. I remember many years ago when I was a Minister of Health and we sank the Nikita and told Barbadians that we were confident that it would develop into an attractive dive site. I was pilloried. I was cursed from pillar to post with letters to the press. The Honourable Member for St. Michael East remembers it. Today he is admitting that he helped curse me too. Today, Barbados boasts that as one of the better dive sites in the Caribbean.

People fly from the corners of the earth. They come from Australia. When they come, they do not sing a song at the airport and take out an ad in the newspapers that they have come to dive, but they come in Targe numbers and even as we speak the Ministry of the Environment, the Honourable Minister of Health can tell you, are now developing another dive site off Carlisle Bay because Barbados now is such a drawing card for divers that they are demanding more dive sites.

Not all of the dive sites are naturally occurring. We are not like Grand Cayman where we have these natural canyons and so on, but you can make a dive site. Mother Nature will help you. Interesting things go on under the water around these islands and we do not take sufficient notice of it.

In an earlier administration I remember we built two artificial reefs in Barbados, one at Folkestone and one at Rockley. Do you know, Mr. Chairman, Sir, that new coral are growing on the artificial reefs of Barbados? That is a very interesting thing because several of the reefs in Barbados are dead. Again that is us as human beings polluting them. We put our wash water onto the reefs, we put our-sewerage raw onto the reef, we dust garbage onto the reef, we dynamite the reef.

Coral is a living thing. If you hit it, it will bruise and turn purple just like a human would. This is the protection that Mother Nature has provided for us, a little island, first landfall out in the Atlantic, and we have the coral reefs to protect it but we are so destructive as human beings that those are the things we do to the reefs - blow them up, lick them up, poison them. That is what we do.

Many of the reefs around Barbados are dead and no scientist has yet been able to discover how to resuscitate a coral reef. They do not fully understand how coral works and sometimes I say thank the Lord for that, because as soon as they understand then they destroy it. Coral cleans itself all the time. The water that we drink in

Barbados filters down through the coral cap and we drink it with a little chlorine gas in it. Yet it does not defile the coral itself. These dead reefs, it would be a wonderful thing if we can now discover a way to encourage the growth of new coral on the old reef. 3.45 p.m.

When we are long dead and gone, generations from now, the people who would be living here would not be as protected as we are and we have a responsibility. This is only given to us in trust and we have a responsibility now that we know better - there was a time when we could claim we did not know any better. We were ignorant of these things but now we know better we have a responsibility to take ameliorating action on these things. I am glad it is happening.

I have a nephew, Sir, who is doing research in this area that is why I know so much about this aspect of it...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has one more minute.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: ....on the growth of new corals and juvenile fish on the artificial reefs of Barbados. It is very interesting indeed. Of course, I live virtually on the reef myself so I am a constant daily observer of it. I love it.

Mr. Chairman, we have to begin to see not only Harrison's Cave but the reefs of Barbados, in fact, all of our near shore waters. We have to begin to see Graeme Hall Swamp, the only wet land left in Barbados. There is nowhere else in Barbados except - the Honourable Member for St. Lucy can bear me out - up near North Point where there are a few mangroves in what used to be a shooting swamp. In fact, I think they may still do some shooting up there.

When I was a child there was a major shooting swamp down at the bottom of Brighton by Texaco pasture. All where the Spring Garden Road is now were mangroves and when the rain fell you would get a bag, a stick and a bottle. You would stuff some brown paper in it with some kerosene oil, light it up, put on some old clothes, find an old hat and go crabbing. You had to understand how to work the stick.

*Aside.*

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes. You had to know how to work the stick. Those fellows used to have big "petties" and they could bite you hard.

*Aside.*

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: "Shanks," yes. That is the word we used.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member is asked to wind up.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, when we built the Spring Garden Highway we destroyed it. It is like when we built the Deep Water Harbour we destroyed Pelican Island so that the national bird of Barbados, which is the pelican, cannot any longer be found in Barbados since the 1960s when the last pelican was sighted. I am pleased to hear now that a private developer who is developing the private part of Graeme Hall Swamp is going to bring pelicans back to Barbados again. This I want to see.

We do not understand sufficiently, and I would wish to see it taught more and more in schools, the way in which we depend as humans on the natural flora and fauna of this country. We depend upon it. We have no idea how it would make a difference to the quality of our lives if a lot of what we have today were to disappear. Harrison's Cave is all a part of that heritage, a very important part of that heritage. I think that future generations will thank this generation, our generation, and the generation before it, that we developed it in the way we did.

Now, it is not every aspect of our natural environment that can bear that kind of development. We are lucky we can make it work for us. It is a major revenue earner for us and we are lucky we can do that but we just have to remember that like everything else that is living we have to care it.

It is not everything that can bear the intrusion of human beings. Approaches are being made, for instance, for the development of Turners Hall Woods but those who know about these matters tell us just having people in it by virtue of that will bring about destruction. It is the only pristine wooded stand left in Barbados. If they taught us one thing when they taught us history when we were children is that when the first settlers came here Barbados was covered in woods like you would find at Turners Hall. Even when I was a child there were other wooded areas in Barbados but what is not built over we have cleared for agriculture.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member is asked to wind up.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: The Honourable Member for St. Joseph is here. There are some beautiful gullies in the parish of St. Joseph. You go down to Surinam. It is a different world all together.

*Aside.*

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: I lived at the Spa for a time as a child and played in streams down there. I saw man jacks down there. There is a part of Barbados that so many people do not know exist that is beautiful. We have a responsibility, as I have been saying, Sir, to be the gatekeepers for the generations coming after us. I admire tremendously the priority the Minister of Health has given to this Cave, not only because it will put a dollar in our pockets and food on our plates, but because it is part of our natural heritage and it has to be preserved for the generations who come after us.

I congratulate you. Thank you, Sir.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, in winding up I would wish to make a few observations and respond to some of the issues raised by other Honourable Members during the course of the debate today. I would wish to thank Honourable Members on both sides for the consensus, support and the general comments on this matter. I think the debate was of a high standard generally save for the intervention of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy who exhibited a tremendous capacity to speak without collaboration between mouth and brain.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member for St. James South is misleading this House. She seeks to speak about herself but she needs to blame someone as usual.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: A good attempt at a return but did not quite make it so therefore I will continue to address the substance of the remarks made by speakers on both sides.

If I may turn first of all to the comments made by the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, he spoke of the degree of thought that needed to go into this matter. I would wish to assure him that the Minister has the degree of celebration he seems to think that only he has. Indeed, much thought has gone into this matter. You will recall that when I spoke to this issue I started by speaking of the long-term viability and sustainability of the Cave. I did say that as an eco-system what we needed to do was to determine the carrying capacity of the Cave. I did say we had to look at the caverns to determine whether in the context of the carrying capacity for people whether in fact it would be economically viable to explore them. I did speak too to the fact that we would put proper management systems in place and a long-term development plan for the Cave. Clearly these issues are being thought of and addressed. It is many of those questions which you raised today that that feasibility study will determine for us.

You spoke in terms of the pricing of the product. I do not agree that there should be a variable price according to the season. My own view is that once we determine what

the maximum carrying capacity of the Cave is and we know whether we should go ahead with the development of the other caverns, then we will look at our cost and determine what price should be charged based on what it cost us to produce the product. I feel we should go for the maximum profit, what the market can bear as opposed to varying the price according to the season and the through traffic. That relates too to the trams.

We know that the facilities as they now stand have to be developed if they are to deal with the numbers that are currently using the facilities. 3.55 p.m.

Clearly we will have also to look at what further expansion would have to be done if those numbers are going to be increased but we cannot now stay where we are because the facilities there cannot handle the numbers that are currently coming through it, so we must do that.

We know that the six trams will deal with the current 190 000 people but we cannot go beyond that until we know for sure what it is exactly the Cave can safely handle and it is at that point that we will determine how many more trams are needed or whether we are going to keep these numbers. Because if it is determined, that it is not viable from a sustainable perspective economically or for the safe maintenance of the eco-system, that we cannot increase the numbers, then we will look at dealing with carrying the load that we now have.

We spoke of the involvement of young Barbadians. I would wish to give the Chamber the assurance that this project has in fact utilised the skills of young Barbadians. Mr. Steve Devonish, who is the Project Manager was previously at the N.C.C. involved in marginal work, yet he is a trained architect and this has been very much his brain child and his development. He has worked very hard on it and we are investing in him to deliver, so he is one of the young people. We just took on at the N.C.C. a young Barbadian scholar, so we are using young people because we think that this Chamber has a lot of young people in it. Barbados has young people with tremendous talent and ability, we have invested in their education and they must give something back to Barbados like the re-development of this Cave and Greenland.

If I can continue to look at the comments made by Honourable Members on both sides during the course of their comments. I do wish to inform the Chamber that we are looking at an integrated project. What we are going to be doing as part of this re-development is linking Harrison's Cave into the Jack-in-the-Box Gully into the Welchman Hall Gully and then to determine what relationship it will have with the Flower Forest and perhaps other entities further afield because they are all in roughly the same area, have similar geophysical characteristics

and we believe that we could benefit from having a ticket that allows you to see all of the facilities at a particular price and packaged tours. So that people who are interested in heritage tourism and eco-tourism and nature base tourism, as it is now more often called, should have the opportunity to be able to enjoy this particular offering of the Barbados Tourism product as a package. So we are very much conscious of the need to do that.

I think your comments in relation to the optimal size of the Cave would have been encompassed in the comments I made earlier in terms of the feasibility and the exploration of the caverns and so. In relation to the marine reserves, I think we would have to accept that the role that both the sewerage projects, south and west coast would play in assisting in the development of the marine park in helping to maintain the quality of the near shore waters is going to be significant. Therefore, you see that there is a happy coincidence of timing in relation to the development of the project and the impact that each project will have in linking to the other and benefitting Barbados and the tourism project generally.

I should just wish to assure the Chamber that those matter which must be done outside of the scope of the feasibility study which are of priority, if in fact we are to deliver an improved product in a short space of time, will be addressed with urgency and to indicate that they are often times when this Chamber speaks with great division on matters of national importance but I am glad that today we are all able to recognise the importance of the Harrison's Cave as a national treasure. As the Deputy Prime Minister called it, part of the national patrimony of our country. I hope that we will together be able to go forward with further consensus towards the development of this very important national project.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I now beg that Head 36 stands part.

*The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.*

*On the motion of Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER, seconded by Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour, the SPEAKER, the passing of one money Resolution in Committee and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.*

*On the separate motions of Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON, seconded by Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER, the Resolution was read a first and second time and agreed to.*

#### ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this House be adjourned to Tuesday, June 24, 1997 at 11.00 o'clock in the morning.

Speaking on the adjournment, Sir, earlier today, I tabled a Resolution which would speak to the foreign policy of Barbados. I would wish to advise Honourable Members, Sir, that in order that Honourable Members should have enough time to do relevant research and prepare themselves for the debate, I would intend that we would have a full dress debate on foreign policy on July 15, 1997. I want people to have a good, clear full month, there can be no excuses why they are not ready for the debate. The Resolution is pitched at a high level. I would hope that we would address ourselves, Sir, to this very important matter, looking towards a new century, indeed a new millennium, bearing in mind that Barbados again plays a leadership role in this region in these matters, bearing in mind, Sir, that this administration has brought an economic component to the work of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I would wish to say to Honourable Members that I genuinely would welcome well thought out inputs.

Foreign policy is not usually a matter on which we seek to be partisan in this Parliament. This too, is another important aspect of our responsibility as Government and I speak now of Government in a very all inclusive context, that it is very important and it is in the interest of all that we look and find points of agreement, new directions for where Barbados will be for the repositioning as the Resolution itself speaks of Barbados. 4.05 p.m.

The Resolution, Sir, speaks of transformation of economic relations worldwide against a background of intense competition. We know that the days of preferential arrangements for us are over. We know that the day of reciprocity has arrived. We do know in all of the major sectors of our economy, most of which are now service sectors, that competition ...

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member, please! I am going to have to stop you at this point. You have made your point.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: I did not want to read out the whole Resolution.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think, at this point, according to the rules that I can allow you to make a speech nor can you go through the details of the Resolution. There is no need for it actually.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Speaking on the adjournment, Sir, I can speak on any issue, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: No you cannot, nor can you go through the details of the Resolution.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: I am not going through the details. That is what I said. I am not going to read

out the Resolution. Now is not the time to do it. I am just trying to...

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please. The Resolution has been circulated. You have made your point about what you want Honourable Members to do and I believe we could finish it off there.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes. But, Sir, I still beg to differ. The Standing Orders of our Parliament allow any Member to speak to any issue, speaking on the adjournment. I have made my point.

*Asides.*

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: I am not finished. Please do not interrupt me. There is no need to interrupt. I have made my point and I hope that Members will respond on the 15th July so that we can have a good high level debate on this matter. I thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: I believe the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East, you were trying to remind us of something.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Yes, and I am speaking on the adjournment now, Sir. I know I should give notice according to the rulings and I think that speaking on the adjournment without notice deals specifically with the provision of dates or times when the Parliament will next meet or to accommodate hours etc., but to venture into the debate I think would be a contravention of the standing orders. So we take the point that the debate will be held on the 15th July and we will prepare for it.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I am speaking on the adjournment. I am not being mischievous, Sir, but I note that this is the first time that the worldwide President of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association has been corrected in terms of Parliamentary Procedure and I hope that this will be a chastening.

I want to raise another question, Sir. Our Parliament now seems to be one that is meeting or scheduled to meet or programmed to meet on a fortnightly basis and Sir, I am really wondering if there are no matters of importance to the public affairs of Barbados that this Government is only asking or requesting Parliament to meet every two weeks. We are being fed a diet of meetings every fortnight and there are many issues which I would hope that the Government would wish to discuss and certainly by the actions of the Opposition, which the Opposition is eager to discuss.

I do not wish for Parliament to become irrelevant to public discussion in this country. There are other channels of communication where matters are being discussed and

debated more frequently and with less formality than we are able to achieve in our Parliament and I hope that we would be able to find a means of causing our Parliament to come to terms with these issues and their relevance as we approach, what the Leader of the House, likes to refer to as the millennium. That is all I wish to say at this time, Sir.

Sir HAROLD St. JOHN: I rise to speak on this very important subject, Sir. I have to say that the state of Parliament reflects parliamentarians because if we are very serious about our business by now we would have had new rules governing the operations of this Parliament. The last ones, I believe, were made in 1972 and this is now 25 years since they were made.

Secondly we would be more vigorous in ensuring that the committee system of Parliament which, after all, is the best mechanism to ensure that the executive is controlled. Certainly we would have looked at how Parliament looks at itself because I think it is a great reflection on Parliament that the West Wing of this building has been in the repair stage for at least 8 years. These are serious reflections on parliamentarians.

My own view is that Parliament will only command respect if parliamentarians themselves so structure their operations that a proper committee system is in operation with convenient subjects, with proper initiatory powers of investigation and investigation in the sense, not of an adversarial nature but an investigation of an enquiring nature with a view to looking at proposals and the soliciting of proposals for reform in many areas of our governmental activity which is in need of reform. So that while, like the Honourable Member I bemoan the fact that Parliament in this country like in many other countries in the world, and it is a very important point, it is a problem that arises all over the world, that Parliament is being looked upon by observers as being a sort of reflection of the views of the executive. We ourselves as parliamentarians must be more assertive and we must insist that it goes back to performing its role. But we are not full time people. That is one of our problems.

The Committee system in these small Parliaments is not going to function when people have, day after day, to earn a living outside of their parliamentary role. So it is a very serious problem that needs reflection and it is not as simple and easy a matter as that. It is a problem with the Westminster system.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, perhaps Honourable Members would be pleased to know, certainly the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, that I have on my desk at this time a report from the Standing Orders Committee which has done its work and has reported copiously and well and I believe that on a

very soon date, before the end of this year, I hope we will have new Standing Orders more in keeping with the practices of a modern Parliament in the 1990's. 4.15 p.m.

As Your Honour knows, the Management Commission of Parliament has a sub-committee which deals with the West Wing which I Chair together with the Leader of the Opposition and the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central and work is to restart on that building within a few weeks<sup>1</sup> time.

We were pouring over the final plans only last week in Your Honour's presence and indeed over Your Honour's Chairmanship. I take the point that the Honourable Member for St. Michael South makes, but when I look at Private Members' Business I see no matter standing in his name. We have a system but we do not work it sufficiently. If there are major issues that Members need to bring for discussion before the House, Private Members' Business is there.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of elucidation and the Honourable Member has graciously given way.

I was not personalising this matter, Sir, I was looking at it from the point of view of Parliament, and I indicated that there were matters under Private Members' Business in the name of Opposition members which we were eager and willing to discuss and I did that within the context of the fortnightly adjournment. I was not saying that I had matters there but that could be true. Even if I had matters there, it would not have made any difference, Sir. The same would apply as it applies to the Leader of the Opposition.

*The question that the House do now adjourn until Tuesday, June 24, 1997 at 11:00 a.m. was put and was resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly. 4.20 p.m.*

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